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EARLY STRUGGLES.



VOL. II.

EARLY STRUGGLES;

BY

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"THE STORY OF A NUN," "THE DOUBLE
MARRIAGE," ETC.

VOL. II.

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EARLY STRUGGLES.

CHAPTER I.

“ Then all for parking, and parading,
Coquetting, dancing, masquerading ;
For balls, plays, courts, and crowds what passion ;
And churches, sometimes —if the fashion.”

MOORE.

LORD KIDWELLY, who had dipped himself very much by gambling, returned about this period from the continent, with the intention of “bringing up,” as he called

it, by residing for a time on his estate in Wales.

This place was not at all agreeable to Diana and Matilda, his two daughters, nor to the honorable Walter Bonham, his only son and heir.

Mr. Bonham however had the satisfaction of being in a degree independent, part of his mother's fortune devolving on him by the marriage settlement, as soon as he became of age—so that, to him, this matter was not of such moment; while Diana and Matilda had nothing until their father's death, except what he chose to allow them.

Lady Kidwelly had died when her daughters were very young; they had therefore been entirely under the care of their governess, an English lady of birth, but who, from a long residence in France, being the English teacher at a boarding school in Paris, had imbibed ideas and

principles that made her very unfit to have the sole management of young people.

They were now beyond her instruction, their education being considered to be finished; but she still remained in the family as a kind of companion and chaperon, Lord Kidwelly thinking his daughters too young to be left entirely to themselves.

Diana and Matilda, however, would have paid little attention to her advice, were she capable of giving it; being determined, now that they were released from the numerous masters who attended them when on the continent, to be entirely their own mistresses. But Miss Woolaston had not the least idea of interfering with their future conduct, and only remained in the family until she could get paid the large arrear of salary which Lord Kidwelly owed her.

This obtained, she purposed to go abroad

again, having, by the death of an aunt, come into the possession of a small competence, which, with the addition of what she had saved, would enable her to spend the rest of her life in some one of the French provincial towns, where society and amusement could be had at little cost.

In England a cheap country town would, in her mind, be banishment from every thing that made life delightful, while in France, amateur concerts, theatricals, and such like, were to be found in the most retired towns and villages.

It was not because Miss Woolaston was deficient in abilities that the two Miss Bonhams were unamiable characters, but it was because Miss Woolaston, though a woman of superior attainments, and a masculine understanding, was an unamiable character herself.

Her religious opinions were unsettled, her code of morality very low, and her

mind was poisoned with the sophistry and false views of right and wrong, to be found in many of the French writers of the day.

To see her pupils finished musicians, graceful dancers, mistresses of all the modern languages, and fashionable in their deportment, was her end, and this she had attained. But the heart was left uncultivated, and while the surface looked brilliant and attractive, weeds of various kinds were nurturing beneath.

Diana had already given her father a great deal of trouble by a serious flirtation she had carried on with a young Frenchman; and though her governess had taken pains to reason with her on the folly of it, she persisted in amusing herself—for her heart was not the least concerned in the matter—until the police were requested by Lord Kidwelly to interfere, and insist upon the lover leaving that part of the

country. Diana laughed at her governess, and derided her fears, for Miss Woolaston dreaded lest Lord Kidwelly should consider *her* to blame. She did but amuse herself she said, she had made Monsieur Pavilly fancy she had a large fortune in her own power, and hence the reason he had haunted her walks and watched her footsteps so closely. As to Lord Kidwelly's anger, Monsieur Pavilly was ordered away and there would be an end of it.

Matilda was the gentler of the two, and had the most feminine manners. Perhaps, had she been educated differently, she might have proved a less selfish being, for she was not without some sentiments of generosity and kindness in her composition. But as the great enemy of moral worth, of duty towards God and our neighbour, is the concentration of one's love on self, so it was doubtful when put

to the test, if she would prove more amiable than her sister.

With these dispositions, to live at Bonham Park seemed nothing but imprisonment to both sisters.

CHAPTER II.

“Some wand’ring touches, some reflected light,
Some flying stroke alone can hit ’em right :
For how should equal colors do the knack ?
Chameleons, who can paint in white or black ? ”

POPE.

“WHAT a dreadfully dull place, sister,” said Matilda, “how shall we amuse ourselves—never to see any thing about one but those green hills, those large, melancholy trees swaying backwards and forwards with every breath of wind, and those herds of deer stalking about the park. Then if one walks out, and tries to

forget oneself in some delicious French romance, the birds keep up such a perpetual twitter, and the river such a murmur that it inclines one to sleep instead of reading; and now to-day I cannot even have a walk—it rains incessantly. And I have read so much this morning! I have finished *Le Renegat*, and it is so exciting, I cannot sit down to begin another book.”

“Our life here is truly monotonous,” replied Diana, “I do not know what we should do had we not brought such a store of novels and romances with us. But then one cannot always read, and we shall die of *ennui* if we do not invent some mode of passing our time, or get up some little scene or other that will interest us.”

“What shall it be?” inquired Matilda, “I do not see what we can find to interest us in this desert. I do not intend to play Lady Bountiful, and visit the poor

cottagers, I assure you, and at Llanluyd the people are all so dull and commonplace."

"Granted," replied Diana, "but you must except Mr. Vaughan—he is quite passable."

"Oh, yes! the tall, rather handsome man in spectacles that we saw in church last sunday, I forgot him, he is only just arrived—yes, he certainly is more than passable. I think he is positively handsome. But he is a genius, I take it—he has a bookish look. I suppose papa must call on him, as his sister visited us on our first coming. She is a horror—you were not within, I think, but I saw her."

"Luckily I was out," Diana said, "and she was not at home when we left our cards. But the brother—he is not the least like her. If one could only animate him—touch his heart—draw him into a

flirtation— no, that wont do, he must be seriously in love.”

“What with both of us,” Matilda exclaimed.

“No, no, Matilda, not with both of us,” Diana replied, laughing, “but with one.”

“Which of us shall it be, Diana?”

“Ah! I do not know,” returned the other, “suppose we play a game of battledore and shuttlecock for his heart—she who wins shall lay the siege, the loser shall look on.”

“Agreed,” Matilda cried, and they took up the battledores.

Soon they are both breathless from racing after the flying shuttlecock.

“What nice amusement for a dull day, how long are we to play, Diana?”

“Oh! until three o’clock, then we will add our games together, and see who has kept it up the longest.”

Three o'clock strikes.

"Come let us see, have you kept count?"

"Yes, each game is pencilled down—and you?"

"I've done the same."

"Let me reckon."

"Ah! Matilda, you have won."

"Have I? I would rather it was you, Diana."

"Never mind, I intend to have a desperate flirtation with the young curate, who, I am told, is to make his appearance here very soon. Remember, you are not to interfere with me there."

"Very well," Matilda says, "I am satisfied. I wonder what Hubert Vaughan can do to entertain us. Can he sing do you think? We want a good counter tenor for some of our duetts—even a bass would be acceptable; but I don't fancy he looks as if he could sing, or dance either; what is one to do with a genius?"

“Ha ! ha ! Matilda, so you have found out his christian name. Hubert Vaughan. Do you think he would answer for the hero of a romance ? But remember, it must be all ‘make believe,’ as in our childhood plays.”

“What nonsense you do talk, sister,” said Matilda coloring, “I can tell you I am as little likely to fall foolishly in love as you are—and with a pennyless author ! Mr. Vaughan is nothing more. He has not a rood of land in the world, nor a sixpence I suspect, but what he makes himself. He is a gentleman, however, for I found out from my maid, who has made some acquaintances in the village, that our property belonged to the Vaughans once.”

“Forgive me, Matilda, I did but jest—you have too much sense for such follies. What—marry a poor man—live in a little cottage with one *help*, no, I mistake, not

in a cottage, but that gloomy old Hall which looks down so grimly on the neighbouring cottages, and is, I am sure, haunted by all the Vaughans who flourished since the time of the red and the white roses—aye, and before that time too I dare say. Only think of so many silk dresses rustling at night above one's bed! It makes my flesh creep.”

Matilda laughed, but she was not quite pleased with her sister's raillery.

The truth was, she had observed Mr. Vaughan in church without knowing his name. The Vaughans' pew, belonging originally to the Hall, had never been alienated from it, and being the largest in the church, strangers were always shewn into it, as had been the custom from time immemorial. These were not many, but a chance tourist sometimes did penetrate into the valley. Matilda had therefore set her maid to learn who this stranger was—

the only one among the men that day in church, who had an air and gait different from those by whom she was surrounded.

In a London church no one would have remarked Hubert Vaughan. But in a country congregation it was not so, and among the farmers, petty shopkeepers, and village maids, old and young, and the very few elderly gentlemen who happened to dwell in the cottages near the green, Vaughan was well calculated to attract attention.

And Matilda's consciousness of curiosity about him was what gave point to her sister's jest.

CHAPTER III.

“Nor will life’s stream for observation stay :
It hurries all too fast to mark their way.”

POPE.

MR. PARRY’S arrival at Llanluyd, with that of the Standifords—some early friends of the Vaughan family, contributed to induce Penelope to enter more into the society of the little place than she had hitherto done.

Her own inclinations would have led her to live as secluded as ever, but Hubert was now fixed at the Hall, some relaxa-

tion would be of use to him, and Emily too ought to be introduced into the world.

The world at Llanluyd! this retired corner—but wherever we reside, the society that surrounds us constitutes our world, and that at Llanluyd had of late been enlarged. Mr. Parry, sensible and sociable, had some one or other in 'till ten every evening, where music—for although an old bachelor, he had not forgotten a piano when furnishing his cottage—and conversation made up the greater part of the entertainment.

Tea-drinkings had always been going on among the old inhabitants of the place, with occasionally a rubber, for some low stake, at whist. But until Mrs. Standiford and her three daughters arrived there was no music.

Miss Vaughan certainly played a little, but not very well, and Emily, taught by her, though with a nice finger, and good

ear, never got beyond a few marches and national airs. Singing she had not attempted, except to hum some simple song when she was alone, just sufficient to shew that she had voice if it were cultivated.

Vaughan was very fond of music, and, when absent from Llanluyd, had often been in the way of hearing good vocal and instrumental performers, and the knowledge of this was quite sufficient to prevent Emily from touching the piano when he was in the house, so that of late it had hardly ever been opened.

The three Miss Standifords though not first-rate musicians, sang pleasingly, their voices harmonizing together as those of sisters generally do.

Vaughan, not able to read a note of music, yet endowed with a naturally fine ear, and good voice, could sing a second or bass to almost any air, and Mr. Parry, who, in his youth had been no mean per-

former on the violin, now found a resource in cultivating this early accomplishment. Thus, though the music was nothing wonderful, it served to pass away the evenings agreeably.

Then there was an old lady skilled in her young days on the harp-lute, who drew it forth from the dusty corner where it had long lain, and inspired by the new taste awakened in Llanluyd, called up the airs with which she had once charmed away many an hour.

Miss Elmour—such was her name—was looked upon in the village as a perfect lady, but considered very odd. Whispers often went about among the lower class as to her entire sanity, and it was with much difficulty that Mr. Parry had drawn her from her retirement.

Although long past middle life, she had still the remains of beauty, which in her youth must have been very striking, and

the grace of her figure gave an air of elegance to garments which on another would have looked poor and mean. Her income was known to be very narrow, but she contrived to live within it, and had ever a mite to bestow in charity.

The interior of her cottage, by the few who were permitted to penetrate into it, (for she kept up scarcely any acquaintances) was considered as a curiosity. The finest chintz flowers had been cut out and pasted on the walls to imitate costly hangings. The chairs, the table covers, the cushions, were all of the most elaborate needlework. The carpet, formed of shreds of various colored cloth, imitated a beautiful Brussels by the skill with which it was knitted, and the delicacy with which the bunches of fruit and flowers which formed the pattern were shaded.

You looked, and read in all around, the solitariness of the life she had led for

years ; and then, as you turned your eyes on her, the wreck of what was once youth and beauty, you wondered what had torn her from a world of which she must have been the ornament.

‘There is some tale of love and disappointment no doubt hidden in her heart,’ the young ones said—and there might be such, but if there were, none ever knew it, and, like a great many others, Miss Elmour added year to year, each one drawing the veil of obscurity more closely around her.

Now that Mr. Parry has fascinated her somehow or other, no one can tell in what way, and won her from her solitude, she often sits in his parlour, a majestic portrait of former times—her thin, wan fingers touching the harp-lute, bringing back perhaps, buried memories and old dreams. Shall we, privileged as we are, pierce the silence that envelops the life of Miss Elmour, and read her history.

It is not an uncommon one.

She was the daughter of a clergyman, who, unable to support a wife and child on the pittance of a curate—and his was the smallest stipend given—became tutor to a young nobleman. This, irksome as the separation from his wife and child was, proved a stepping-stone to preferment. Immediately on coming into his title and estate, which he did when he was about three and twenty, Lord Linley presented his quondam tutor with a small living which had just fallen into the gift of the family. The glebe house and land bordered on his own domain, and this he said in the very handsome letter he wrote to him, increased the pleasure he had in bestowing it, as it would be the means of bringing a friend nearer to him.

Lord Linley had given his tutor a great deal of trouble while he was under his care; he was thoughtless, averse to study,

and very much of a free-thinker. Nevertheless there were some redeeming points in his character, and gratitude to one who had taken a great deal of trouble with him was amongst them.

Mira Elmour was about fourteen years of age when her father came to live near Castle Linley. Until now she had been instructed by her mother, who—although a good woman and sensible enough in many respects—proud of her daughter's lofty style of beauty, filled her mind with aspiring notions, and vague ideas of future grandeur.

Mira, notwithstanding her ambitious views, had fine feelings and a susceptible heart. She doated upon her parents, and was easily moved to pity by any tale, real or feigned, of sorrow or distress; and those two master-springs of her nature—love and ambition—had they happened to come into collision, would most probably

have awakened one day or other a storm of contending passions in her soul.

It was not thus however.

Lord Linley had two sisters—one the same age as Mira Elmour, the other a year older. Anxious to do his former tutor still more service, he proposed that Mira's education should be completed by the first-rate governess who had the charge of his sisters, and that she should partake with them of masters when they went, as they did every year, for a few months to London.

The father looked grave upon the proposal. For the last four years he had been enabled by the money he had saved during the period he was a tutor to manage very well and enjoy the society of his wife and child. This he thought would be in part like losing his child again. But the fond, proud mother eagerly caught at the offer so kindly intended,

and Mr. Elmour, with a sigh, suffered himself to be persuaded.

Thus Mira was thrown into society quite above what it was likely would be her lot in life, and received an education more elegant and showy than substantial.

All this time she saw very little of Lord Linley. He was a good deal on the continent, but proposed making Castle Linley his principal residence as soon as his sisters were older.

Five years soon passed away ; the eldest of his sisters, lady Maria was now nineteen, and her brother, who was very fond of her, welcomed the time when he might place her at the head of his table.

Fond of amusement, and not very choice in his associates when from home, he yet took the most scrupulous care in the selection of the guests he invited to Castle Linley, and exercised his natural discrimination in choosing suitable companions

for his sisters, mostly among the young and gay it is true, but all with some talent or endowment to give a charm to his circle.

Mira's manners were engaging, and her temper without a cloud. The ladies Maria and Joanna were both fond of her, and insisted upon their young friend being as much as ever at Castle Linley, assuring her parents that no pleasure was fully enjoyed of which Mira did not partake.

The parents were both flattered at these marks of attention to their child. The father, 'tis true, feared all this might unfit his daughter for their more humble sphere of life, yet he had not the moral courage sufficient to be firm against the pleadings of wife and child. He gave in unwillingly, but still he gave in.

Mrs. Elmour saw in his consent a pros-

pect of the full realization of all her plans, and secretly triumphed.

And now fêtes and dances, music and private theatricals, were the order of every day. Mira excelled in all she attempted.

There was nothing that could be said to be positively wrong; but when the minister preached on Sunday against the pomps and vanities of the world, his heart smote him as he looked from the pulpit at his beautiful daughter.

And now it is surprising how fast year after year flew on in the same unvaried round.

Twice Mira went with her friends to London in the season, but her father, seeing how pale and dispirited she appeared on her return, took courage, and prohibited her going again.

There was another reason that made Mira dejected besides the contrast pre-

sented by the quiet glebe house to the scenes she delighted in.

Her life had become one of hope, followed by perpetual disappointment. Lord Linley had always treated her with the utmost attention and consideration. She was the daughter of his tutor, the friend of his sisters, and a charming girl to boot, in his eyes, but nothing beyond this.

He was not a marrying man, and least of all would he have thought of a pretty girl without fortune or connection. Seeing her so much she appeared like part of the family, something belonging to it—almost a relative—and he looked for her naturally to make one in every party of pleasure. She mistook him entirely, and allowed herself to be dazzled by his position, his manners, his handsome person, and his *bonhomie*. This prepossession—union of ambition and love—was hidden in her own bosom.

The fond mother secretly cherished a similar hope. She did not dare breathe it to her husband however, who she knew would exclaim at its folly, and probably defeat it entirely.

Thus did time steal away—the years of youth and bloom pass swiftly—one after another the ladies Maria and Joanna were married and settled in distant parts of the country.

The bachelor Lord still kept up the former festivities whenever he was at the castle, and, kind as ever to his old tutor, never came there without frequently dropping in at the glebe-house to pass an hour with him in social chat, and if a sister, or lady aunt was staying with him, Mira was expected to be at the castle as much as ever.

Thus she hoped on—hope feeds upon very little.

Meantime two or three eligible matches

offered. Mira's refusals were peremptory. The father sighed.

"Mira will have but a poor pittance when we die, my dear," he said to his wife. "I wish she had accepted Mr. N., a truly worthy man, and a sincere Christian."

"Our child will be sure to make a better match than that," the wife returned, rather indignantly.

"Sarah," said he, and he said it rather sternly for him, "take care that you do not put nonsense in the girl's head. But it is I am to blame for it. I see it now—she cannot like plain people—we should have kept her at home with us."

Mrs. Elmour was silent—she was very fond of her husband, and did not like to see him vexed; but in her own mind she was not at all convinced he was right. Mira would never have played the harp-lute, or sung, or have looked so fashionable

if they had kept her at home. And what though she was not so young as she had been, still she was a very fine looking woman, and *he* was yet unmarried.

Thus Mira's life passed in a fevered dream.

At length she was awakened from it. Her father came in one morning with a newspaper in his hand. There was an expression in his face that betokened news of pleasing description. He immediately read aloud from it the marriage of Lord Linley to a daughter of the Duke of——. The ceremony took place at Rome.

Mr. Elmour had always wished his patron to marry, and to marry suitably—the visions of his wife and daughter never entered into his mind, for, although he suspected Mira had aspiring notions, he knew not that her affections were fixed—and upon Lord Linley.

Mira had sufficient self-possession at the

moment to conceal her feelings from her father. There was something so stunning in the information that she felt turned to stone.

The following day brought a letter from Lord Linley to his good old tutor—only a few lines, but it was so kind of him to think of him at such a time. The worthy tutor was fully gratified.

And now Lord Linley was again at home. Grandeur doings and a higher and more formal tone of society marked the change from bachelor to married life. There was no variation however in the friendship he felt for his former tutor, and he would have wished, if it were possible, to see the old man, his wife and daughter, frequent guests at his table.

But Mr. Elmour's habits were long formed—he disliked company, so did his wife, and Mira, disappointed and unhappy, could no longer be drawn thither.

The mother's eyes were open at last to a sense of her own and her daughter's folly—but it was too late—Mira's bloom was gone, and even if it had not been, she was too heart-seared to return the affection of any one.

She was however spared the importunity of parents and friends, as she never had another offer after Mr. N. proposed for her.

Quietly now she passed into middle life—then into age.

Her father and mother died within a year of each other, and, without tie or inclination for any particular spot, she came to Llanluyd as a place far removed from the scenes of her chagrin, and one best suited to her very moderate income.

For many years she shunned every kind of society, and scarcely saw any one except a few of the poor. An habitual melancholy stole over her. She did not

give up to it entirely however, but employed herself in a thousand fanciful works decorative of her cottage. These served to pass away her hours, and although her mind was always busy with the past, the present glided on calmly though monotonously.

Her seclusion, and often fantastic dress, (for every thing she put on, be it ever so simple, was worn with an air different from other people) made many shake their heads as they passed, and say "what an odd lady is Miss Elmour."

Not until after Mr. Parry's arrival in the village was there the least change in this mode of life. Then the taste for music which sprung up among the good folk, and his energetic endeavours to lure her into his friendly circle, drew Miss Elmour out by degrees, and she found at last a satisfaction in mixing a little in society, which she fancied she should never have had again.

Two still older ladies, sisters, (I think I now see them) whose dates and ages were equally unknown, personifications in appearance of the witches of Macbeth, dressed in the habiliments of gone by days, seemingly an hundred years ago, with quaint cap, stiff stays, bordered petticoat and farthingale, sometimes, but not very often likewise dropped in for an hour or two in the evening, at Mr. Parry's, their maid Molly always coming to fetch them at the time that in less unsophisticated spots they would have been but just making their appearance.

Though the necessity of economising had driven them into this village some forty years before, those sisters were, nevertheless, connected with many of the first families in England, and the ponderous bible, full of notes and pictures which lay on their table, had the arms of a noble house emblazoned on its title

page. Wrinkled and furrowed they were, with white beards and thin faces, but still something courtly hung about their manners, and none could say that they might not once have played a conspicuous part in the drama of life.

“Vanity of vanities!” the preacher would have exclaimed, as he looked at them.

Emily knew these Misses Tourteville a little, as Miss Vaughan had always kept up an occasional morning visit with them, and the other inhabitants of the cottages round the Green; but seeing them by candle-light in the furbelowed, antique silk which had been their company dress for years, and the caps and ruffles of point-lace—dark from the hand of time—she felt a sort of awe as if she sat with spectres of the past.

A few other families made up the small circle at Llanluyd. Among them the

widow of a clergyman and her daughter—a Mrs. and Miss Creighton, the latter no longer young—both mild unassuming women, teachers at the Sunday School, and visitors of the poor people in the village.

An old gentleman, a Mr. Carradock, had long resided by himself in one of the smallest cottages.

He was a sensible man, though rather eccentric, a collector of every kind of curiosity, a botanist and a gardener. His great amusement was, if permitted, to arrange the gardens of all the cottages that skirted the Green—prune the fruit trees and transplant the lettuces. Rumor gave out that he had once been very rich and lost a great deal of money on the turf. But, be this as it might, nothing could be more simple and innocent than his pursuits for the twenty years that he had resided at Llanluyd.

But perhaps the most remarkable character in the village was Nat Walton, angler, punster, and poet.

Nobody knew much of Nat's early days—he was now a man of about fifty-five—except that by his own account he had tried every profession, and not liking any, contrived to while away life according to his own fancy, upon a small annuity.

Of his parentage all that he thought proper to disclose was his descent from the famous Isaac Walton; and from this progenitor, he always declared, he derived his passion for angling and his skill in tying flies.

He had arrived at the little village inn some six years before the present time, with the intention of remaining a week or two, being, as he said, on one of his fishing excursions; but had ever since, with the exception of a short tour now and then, made it his abode.

The small way-side house called an inn, covered with creepers and having a rural aspect, was kept by a tidy, bustling landlady of the name of Mogg. Her husband being employed in farming some land close to it, threw all the trouble and responsibility into her hands. A large garden filled with all sorts of fruit trees and old-fashioned flowers, spread out at the back, and by giving Mr. Walton the occupancy of two pretty private rooms looking into it, and studying his comfort and convenience in every particular, she secured his stay; for, although he was always going, he never went.

An intimacy, which he formed with a half-pay captain in the army of the name of Roberts, a widower with three or four daughters—good-humored every-day sort of girls, who liked a man dangling at the tea-table—helped to while away the time agreeably enough, and contributed to fix

Nat in a spot where trout were abundant and living was cheap.

When he was not fishing he wrote riddles for the young ladies—described their pic-nic parties in doggrel rhymes—read aloud while they worked, and had always something to say to make them laugh.

“Certainly Mr. Nat Walton is the drollest man in the world!” exclaimed Lizzy Roberts, as she folded up one of his poetical notes, just received, informing her that he had a bad cold and could not take tea with her that evening.

CHAPTER IV.

“From silver spouts the grateful liquors glide,
While China’s earth receives the smoking tide.”

POPE.

“WHY, Matilda, what are you about? You have changed your dress,” exclaimed Diana Bonham, early one evening as she met her sister in the corridor with her bonnet in her hand. “Where can you be going?”

“To take tea with Mrs. Standiford,” returned Matilda, looking rather confused,

and certainly as if she had rather Diana had not met her.

“You are not going to mix in the village society ! my dear Matilda. How can you think of such a thing ! Do send an excuse.”

“Oh I really cannot get off, I promised, and the Standifords are very passable. And then I shall meet such a set of quizzes ! It will be very entertaining. You need not look so grave, Diana ; good bye.”

“One minute—are the Vaughans to be there ?”

“Yes, the Vaughans are to be there.”

“I thought so.”

“Now don’t open your eyes so at me, Diana,” said Matilda, trying to laugh, and then adding coaxingly, “You know it is quite settled—is it not—that I am to make Hubert Vaughan fall desperately in love with me. Did not you say so ? Did we not play for his heart ?”

“True,” replied Diana, laughing, “but you take the matter in earnest. I was but in jest—a piece of folly *pour passer le temps*.”

“Yes, that is it,” returned Matilda. “It is *pour passer le temps*—I am quite in earnest about that. It will be something to interest me, something to amuse me.”

“You will succeed then,” said Diana, looking attentively at her sister. “How simple your costume is, and yet what pains you have taken with it!”

“It would not do,” replied Matilda, gratified at the observation, “to appear at Mrs. Standiford’s as if I was expecting a ball. Good bye: it is only an early tea-party, and if papa wonders what takes me to Mrs. Standiford, say, I know he likes me to make myself popular in the village—you heard him say so the other day.”

Most of the people mentioned as mak-

ing up the village cotery were assembled that evening in Mrs. Standiford's drawing-room.

They knew another guest was expected and many of them, while they sipped their tea and coffee, eagerly watched the door. The young ones hoped to see some French fashions—the elder ones wondered how the proud Miss Matilda Bonham would comport herself.

The Vaughan party alone were indifferent. Emily had got hold of a portfolio of prints. Hubert was conversing with Mr. Parry on the subject of the next lecture to be given at their new institution, and a chord in Miss Penelope's heart was touched by the earnestness with which Mr. Parry pressed him to prepare a lecture for it.

The door opened and the honorable Miss Matilda Bonham was announced.

Those who looked for French fashions

were surprised at the simplicity of her dress. Those who thought of her as one of the proud Miss Bonhams, were gratified with the suavity of her manner.

She was all winning affability or softness. She was every thing to every one. Her voice was music—her step was grace. And when, in the course of the evening Hubert Vaughan led her to the piano, he thought the ungloved hand that rested upon his arm was the whitest, and most delicately formed he had ever beheld.

She sang, and every one acknowledged that she was a finished musician, while the notes floated for hours afterwards through the, until then, clear head and impenetrable heart of Vaughan.

Music went on for the greater part of the evening, solo after solo, duet after duet, diversified by the violin and harp-lute. Many of the solos were executed by Matilda, and in several of the duets and glees she took a part.

It was truly a musical treat for Vaughan and Mr. Parry.

The Misses Roberts and Mr. Nat Walton, who did not happen to be fond of music, with one or two others of the party, placed themselves in a small boudoir, little more indeed than a recess, which opened off from the larger room by an arched door-way, intended for folding doors or curtains.

Here a conversation *sotto voce* was carried on without disturbing the singers—laughter smothered, and riddles propounded.

Mr. Nat Walton being always applied to when enigmas or rebusses were proposed, gave several new ones—his own compositions within the last few days. One had gone round and round the circle and was on the point of being given up, when Lizzy Roberts caught the meaning, and exclaimed——But we will give the

riddle in order to illustrate Mr. Nat Walton's powers of amusing.

"I am a word of letters five—
You may fancy me either dead or alive,
Fat or lean, short or tall,
I belong to one and all.
Take away my first and second letter,
And perhaps you may like me better.
I'll chatter and dance, gambol and play,
And amuse you the live-long day."

An audible burst of pleasure escaped from Lizzy's lips as she pronounced the answer.

Ah! Mr. Nat Walton, you see you cannot puzzle me, and this brought Mrs. Standiford from the extremity of the other room to entreat the young ladies not to make so much noise.

All were profoundly silent for a minute or two, then Lizzy Roberts whispered

"Mr. Nat Walton, one more—do give us one more."

He put his finger to his lips and shook his head—but another, and another young lady attacked him.

At last, pretending not to like it—muttering that they plagued the life out of him, but secretly gratified, he took a pencil and card out of his pocket, and wrote the following, which went round like the other:—

“I’m your father, your mother,
Your sister, your brother,
Aunts, uncles and cousins,
Though you count ’em by dozens;
Add to me now one letter, if you please,
And I’ll stick closer to you than all these.”

Leaving them to discuss it, let us look at those in the outer room.

The two Misses Tourteville, statue-like and pale, sit as intent listeners at each side of the piano. They are both fond of music.

Miss Elmour leans one elbow upon a

small table near her, and partly shades her face with her hand. The other arm steadies the harp-lute, having just played an air on it which formed an interlude between the songs. She sees nothing around her—hears nothing but the duet of “Love in thine eyes,” sung by Miss Matilda Bonham and Mr. Vaughan.

Thus passes the evening, and before it is finished some music has been selected, and a practice morning fixed on, when Matilda promises to come and sing them over with the Misses Standiford. Mr. Vaughan is pressed to join, and lend the aid of his voice, but he refuses—he cannot spare time—it would break in upon his morning occupations. It is impossible—he really cannot—they must excuse him.

“One morning—only just once—do join us,” Matilda cried, and her dark eye flashed so beseechingly on him!

She saw he wavered.

“You must persuade Mr. Vaughan to come once,” she said to the eldest Miss Standiford, and the dark eyes, looking softer than ever, were again turned from Miss Standiford to him.

Miss Standiford urges the point. They could not practice the trio without a bass voice, she said.

“You must give us a quarter-of-an-hour Mr. Vaughan,” Matilda said playfully, “you must not refuse.”

And Vaughan—flattered and captivated—could not refuse, although he quarrelled with himself all the way home for his want of steadiness.

The following morning was not practice morning, and every thing went on as usual.

The same number of hours were spent in the study, Vaughan at his desk, Emily employed in copying some papers for him.

They had not met until after breakfast.

Vaughan had taken his early, as he often did, and been out for a long walk before he went to his accustomed occupations, and nothing had occurred to elicit any remarks on the past evening, but Emily fancied he was more silent than usual.

When they assembled at dinner, however, a remark from Miss Vaughan shewed the bent of his thoughts. He was eloquent in the praises of Matilda Bonham. Her graces—her beauty—the charm of her manner, all seemed to have struck the scholar as he had never been struck until then.

CHAPTER V.

“Drawn with the pow’r of an heart-robbing eye.”

SPENSER.

EMILY heard Vaughan express his admiration of Matilda Bonham with feelings she had never experienced before. It could not be called envy—it was a sensation of despair at her own want of beauty.

She stole away in a melancholy mood to the vicinity of the window just above the clock, and sitting down on a step of the stairs, hid her face with her hands.

A profound depression weighed down her spirits.

Oh, if she were lovely, like Matilda Bonham! Once, she remembered, people used to say she was a pretty little thing, but not lately. No: she knew she was quite altered since a child. She heard Vaughan say so to aunt Penelope, when he returned last from France. She did not mind it then—what did beauty signify? All her books said “nothing.” She had often heard aunt Penelope say so. But this gift of beauty!—it was then a gift. Happy Matilda!—she had it. Oh why was she not, herself, beautiful too?

Thus she sat with her face buried in her hands, and her young heart ready to break.

At last she heard a step at the bottom of the stairs. It was Vaughan’s. He called her.

“Emily—Emily.”

Frightened at the idea of his seeing her thus, she started up, stole softly to her own room, and locked herself in. There, as she moved across the apartment, she caught a glimpse of herself in the mirror.

She approached it, and looked steadfastly into it. She would examine her own face, and see where lay the difference between her and Matilda Bonham.

Her pale, dejected appearance—eyes that looked too large for the rest of her features—smooth hair tightly drawn back and all its luxuriance hidden by being twisted up in a knot behind (Miss Penelope having long since made her give up her ringlets as being too childish)—dress fitting tightly to a figure not yet arrived at its full proportion, shewed her at once the vast dissimilarity between them.

Then she fancied she saw Matilda beside her. There was the graceful form set off with all the adornment that a Parisian

milliner could bestow upon the simple robe she had worn. The hair, black as the raven's wing—rich pearls drawn through it—shading her face with soft curls and braided round the head in a thousand glossy plaits and bands. The eyes black and sparkling, not saucer looking like hers. The arms so rounded!—the hands so white!—the light, gay laugh—the witty repartee. Ah! there was no doubt of it. Matilda was all beauty—she all plainness. What wonder that Vaughan should admire!

Then she heard a tap at her door.

“Emily, Hubert is searching everywhere for you, he wants you to take a walk with him,” said the voice of aunt Penelope; “what can you be about, my dear? Why, I believe you are bolted in.”

Emily opened the door. Penelope looked at her with surprise.

“How pale you look, child, and so

scared. I am certain that all the writing that Vaughan sets you to do, turns your head. There, you are not pale now, you are quite red. I am sure you are not well—you have got the headache. How hot your forehead feels. Tell me, dear, have you a headache?"

Emily might well say she had a headache. She had both the headache and the heartache.

"Yes aunt, I have got a headache."

"Ah! I thought so, nothing will do you so much good as a walk with Vaughan—put on your bonnet at once."

Emily busied herself with her bonnet. She did not dare answer Penelope. She was afraid, if she spoke, she should burst into tears.

Penelope, who was really very fond of her, arranged her cloak, tied her bonnet, and kissed her.

Then she led her down stairs.

“Racketting does not do for this poor child, although we were not out very late last night, or else you have been making her write too much, Vaughan, she is quite nervous to-day, and has got a headache.

“My sweet Emily,” said he, “my dear little sister—though I must not call you my *little* sister now, must I? I am very, very sorry to find you are not well. But come, we will take a long walk together. That will cure your headache. I have been looking for you everywhere to ask you to give me the pleasure of your company.”

As he said these words he drew her hand within his arm, and conducted her down a shady lane, that led to a path which ran along the river. After a few moments’ silence he said,

“I hope the air does you good, Emily, you are better already I am sure, you do not look so pale as you did ; you have not

so much headache now, have you, dear?"

"My headache is much better, thank you," said Emily, who really felt herself more composed.

"And now with respect to the writing, Emily. I really believe you have been doing too much. Your criticism on that last work surprised me, it was so judicious. I could not help thinking when I read it, how vexed the author would be, could he know that it was a young girl of seventeen who had dissected his book so well. It must have cost you both thought and time, but you have done it admirably. Your assistance is invaluable, nevertheless in future we must limit the hours. I would not for the world that you should weary yourself."

"I do not think I ever get a headache from writing," said Emily, too ingenuous to shelter herself under the plea.

Vaughan talked on, admired her assiduity, lauded her perseverance.

Praise from Vaughan—how pleasing to her ear at another time—but now she wanted no praise on such score. What did her cleverness, if she was indeed clever, signify in this respect? Beauty—accomplishments—but above all, beauty, that was what she longed for. Vaughan was very kind, always kind to her—but still .———

She did not know what she wished, in fact. She only felt that she was not pretty.

Emily wept herself to sleep that night, but her sleep was short and disturbed, and she was up at dawn of day.

Again her looking glass shewed her a pale face, in her mind devoid of all attraction.

She dressed herself quickly, stole out of the room, and glanced at the great clock. Its ticking had a sorrowful sound to her ears.

“ For ever—never !
Never—for ever ! ”

Not five yet. Nobody in the house up.

She went back again, opened her window, took a book and endeavoured to read.

With energy of purpose to be commended, she determined to conquer her bad temper, for they were bad tempers she was sure.

The book she happened to light upon was a tale—the history, supposed to be related by herself, of a very plain woman. She had had the small pox in childhood, which had obliterated every trace of prettiness that she might once have possessed. There was an account of her unhappiness at being so frightful—of the trouble she took to hide herself from every one—of the sympathy of a kind friend who discovered her good qualities, and loved her in spite of her appearance—of how her dis-

like to seeing people was combatted—how she devoted herself to improving her mind and fascinated at last the most amiable man in the world.

Emily's eyes filled with tears as she read these pages. There seemed to be consolation in them for her.

It was not absolutely necessary then to be beautiful to inspire love.

CHAPTER VI.

" Not rural sights alone, but rural sounds
Exhilarate the spirit, and restore
The tone of languid Nature."

COWPER.

EMILY looked so pale and depressed for some days that Miss Vaughan thought a change of scene would do her good, and sent her to spend a long day with Mrs. Benson, at the Apjohn's farm.

Mrs. Benson was grieved to see her dear child, as she always called Emily, in such low spirits.

Something must be the matter with her—was she ill? no—was she unhappy at the Vaughans? no, oh no, nobody could be kinder to her than they were. Perhaps her darling did not feel herself independent enough; perhaps the allowance she made her was not sufficient for her clothes and little expences (for Emily had a small regular allowance from her dear old grandmamma.)

But Emily said,

“Oh! grandmamma, quite enough—more than I spend. And even if it were not I would not let you pinch yourself to increase it. But I have quite sufficient—enough for my music and books, and every thing I want.”

“Ah! perhaps my darling child grieves because I am getting so old, she fears it will be hard with her after my death—no, I cannot live long, dear, but you shall not be thrown upon the world penniless;

though I am sure if it were the case, Mr. and Miss Vaughan, who are so fond of you, and have taken such pains to educate you, would always watch over you, and look upon you as a sister. But even if it pleased God to take them from you, you would not be left desolate. I have not a great deal to leave the beloved granddaughter of my dear, sweet mistress; but you may assure yourself it will at least enable you to have a pretty wee cottage of your own in this cheap country, or to live in lodgings in some nice farm house as I do; for although great part of what I have dies with me, I have been saving up something for you ever since I came down here. So cheer up my child, and do not brood over the future."

But Emily thought not of worldly goods. She was contented with the present as to independence, and did not brood over the future. It was none of these

things that weighed down her young heart. She did not well know what it was, but she was sure it must be some bad, envious feeling, and she determined to wrestle with it.

A day with her grandmamma was soothing to her spirits, and she tried to devote her thoughts entirely to this best of friends.

Mrs. Benson, though in good health, was now bent almost double, and walked about feebly with a stick. She still contrived to get into the garden and a neighbouring meadow, where they were at this time saving hay.

Thither she took Emily with her, and bidding her sit beside her on one of the haycocks, soon had the pleasure of perceiving that she had forgotten her cares, whatever they were.

There is something delightfully inspiring in the sight of a hay-field. The new

mown hay smells deliciously. The hay-makers look joyous and happy. Poor they are to be sure ; but occupation in the open air, a fine sunny day, accompanied by the merry laugh of the young (for even childish hands trail the long rake,) the quaint jest of the old, the blended voices of other labourers in the distance, with perchance the plough-boy's whistle hard by—the draughts of home-brewed ale occasionally supplied to refresh them during the heat. All makes them forgetful of aught but the scene before them, and shews the life of a peasant in one of its most pleasing aspects.

Emily thought “ what a beautiful world this is ! ” as she looked and listened, and caught every sound, even the ceaseless hum of the insect tribe, wheeling and disporting themselves in the adjoining shade of trees. “ And how wrong of me to feel discontented and unhappy when God has given me such friends, and so

many, and surrounded me with those joyous sights and sounds. No, I will not allow myself to wish for anything but what I have. And this beauty that I so covet—what is it? If I had it, an accident, a fit of sickness, the small pox for example, might deprive me of it entirely.”

And what says the poet—

“Beauty is but a vain and doubtful good;
A shining glass, that fadeth suddenly.”

And another writes

“But a smooth and stedfast mind,
Gentle thoughts and calm desires,
Hearts with equal love combined
Kindle never-dying fires.
Where these are not I despise
Lovely cheeks, or lips, or eyes.”

Thus did Emily console herself.

Mrs. Benson looked placidly around too, and although she could not quote poetry, for in her unlearnedness she had scarcely

ever read any, yet she felt what one of our writers so well expresses,

“Scenes that soothed
And charmed me young, no longer young, I find
Still soothing, and of pow’r to charm me still;”

And her mind reverted to the time when, no more a wretched, unfriended little girl, but supported, and comforted by the kindness of her dear young mistress, she sat beneath the shade of the old hawthorn in the meadow at Woodhouse, and watching the ducklings as they swam about the pond, or picked up grubs on its margin, wished for no other lot—happy to live all day long in the green fields.

Then she raised her eyes and heart in thankfulness to heaven, that had enabled her to stretch forth a hand of protection to the grandchild of one, who had so kindly taught and protected her.

And now she looked at Emily sitting

beside her in her large straw hat. The air had brightened her cheeks—the scene had brought a happy expression into her face.

“How pretty she is,” thought Mrs. Benson, just the moment after Emily had satisfactorily made up her mind that although she had not beauty, like Matilda, there were better and more lasting gifts to be sought for and obtained.

Once only during the rest of the day did any depression overshadow Emily’s spirits.

Fanny—Llewellyn’s wife, very busy all day in seeing the ale served out to the haymakers, and in looking after the preparations for their supper, came to apologize to Emily for the little time she had to bestow upon her, and as she stood talking, and remarking how much some of the young people at work, had grown in the last two or three years, pointing

out one peasant as having had several deaths in his family, another as being only just returned from his son's wedding, and all those little circumstances discussed in every class of life, she called Emily's attention to a good looking young man, who was at work beside a pretty sun-burnt girl.

“They are engaged,” said she, “but I dare say they will not marry for five or six years. He is devoted to her, and thinks all his leisure time lost if he is not at her side. To-day I am sure he would not change his place with any king, for they do not often meet in the hours of labour. His father wanted him to think of another, whose parents can give her a couple of cows and some sheep, but he would not listen to the suggestion, and has at last brought his father round by his praise of the one he prefers. They must wait however, for her mother is a widow,

and can give her child nothing but a blessing.

“An honest, God-fearing woman,” observed Mrs. Benson, “I used to look in on her when I could walk so far—very poor she is, but always neat and clean.”

“Ah! love is always jealous,” continued Mrs. Apjohn, “See how he watches her lest any one else should approach. He need not be afraid of her, she is all truth. There, he is asking her if her rake is not too heavy. He thinks of nothing but her.”

While Llewellyn's wife spoke, Emily felt an unaccountable pang—*un serrement de cœur* as Rousseau has it, oppress her; why it was so she could not tell. If a prince had offered her his heart, she felt she should not value it, but she did not unveil to herself that there was *one* whose love she could value above every thing in the world. Gratitude, friendship, sisterly affection, had always presented themselves

to her mind when there was any question of *him*, and had managed so to cloke and hide what lay beneath, that she knew not the source of the deep pain she experienced at his admiration of Matilda, nor that it was the happiness of those rustic lovers which now struck her in contrast with herself. Poor child! she strove to overcome this strange unamiableness, as she deemed it, and to sympathize in the pleasure with which Fanny pointed them out.

Her efforts succeeded—it was but a passing cloud.

And now Fanny went on,

“Do you see that fine looking young woman yonder, who uses the rake with such an air. I doubt if she likes working in a hay-field. That is one of our village coquettes. She has cast off two or three rustic beaux already, after engaging herself and receiving fairings. She will

never be married, depend upon it although she is a handsome girl."

"I told her mother to keep a tight hand over her, when she was a child," observed Mrs. Benson, "I saw she thought too much of her good looks, and how she could adorn herself. Beauty is frequently a snare, and those who have it not, particularly in her rank of life, are generally the best off."

"A doubtful good, a gloss, a glass, a flower,
Lost, faded, broken, dead within an hour.'"

thought Emily, philosophically.

CHAPTER VII.

“—And so did warlike Anthony neglect
The world’s whole rule for Cleopatra’s sight.
Such wond’rous pow’r has women’s fair aspect,
To captive men and make them all the world reject.”

SPENSER.

It would be only going over the old tale, so often told, to trace the development of passion between Matilda and Vaughan.

Matilda had begun in sport what she had never intended should be earnest. She had reckoned too much upon her own self-possession, and the impossibility of

ever loving a poor man like Vaughan. On becoming aware of the sentiment which had stolen into her bosom, terrified at the labyrinth into which she was about plunging, and the thought of the anger of her father, she would have drawn back, but it was too late. Vaughan, taken in the meshes she had laid for him, awakened to feelings which his previous freedom from them now that they were aroused, only rendered the more powerful, in his turn exercised that control over her which a strong mind generally does over a weaker.

She had determined in the beginning to attract him, to trifle with him, as she had seen Diana do with others, for an hour's amusement, and then throw him off, as carelessly as she would have done her glove, but now she found this could not be, and the handsome scholar, passionate in his devotion, laying all the love of an honest and true heart at her feet, flattered

her vanity, captivated her imagination, and occupied all her thoughts.

To Diana however she kept up the appearance of the careless coquette.

Having no heart herself, Diana could not fancy that Matilda had any, and all her warnings were lest her father might be displeased should he discover the flirtation.

Meantime, while Matilda played the outward part of indifference in the eyes of Diana, she found means to throw herself constantly in Vaughan's way, and soon to meet him secretly and often.

Lover as he was, the walks which she had with him were not at the first of his proposing—it was the whisper of her admiration of nature, and her solitary evening strolls, that drew him to her side.

He had soon given up going in the morning to the musical meetings at Mrs. Standiford's, which, although Diana

laughed at her for doing so, Matilda continued to attend.

He had felt that his liking for Matilda was increasing, and he did not choose his looks and words to be commented on by the group assembled there. Still, although after looking in two or three times he declined making one of them, he was frequently on the watch for Matilda as she passed up and down the lane that skirted the side of the Hall, with her music book in her hand.

This lane was a round for Miss Matilda Bonham when she came into the village, but no doubt she preferred it because it was shaded, and full of wild flowers.

Then there was the smile, the pressure of the hand, the passing word—soon lingerings on the way homewards—questions to ask the scholar about the botanical names of the wild plants and flowers.

Poor Emily sat in the study writing—

hardly knowing why she should weep, she wrestled with her tears and devoured them.

Vaughan never asked himself how this could end, neither did Matilda; and although passion was on his lips, she so skilfully evaded his direct avowal that it was not until moonlight walks were commenced beneath the silence and solitude of trees, planted by one of his progenitors that he breathed to her those words, which while they made her heart thrill with pleasure, filled her with terror at the idea of her father's and Diana's displeasure, and made her wish she had not gone so far.

A little way outside the village was an old, unused churchyard, which ran up within the domain wall of Bonham Park, and joined a thick screen of trees, a wood it might be called, so matted and overgrown was it, extending round the grounds.

Beneath the ruined church lay the burial vault of the Vaughans, and near at hand the name, half defaced by time, was to be seen on many of the mouldering tombstones, at once a memento of past ages, and an emblem of the changed position of the family.

Into this screen, or wood, an entrance could be easily made from the churchyard.

Its walks were seldom resorted to by any of the inhabitants of the place, and were now little more than overgrown paths running beneath the covert of forest trees many of which looked grey with age.

The shrubberies around the house were trimmed up and nicely kept, but the wood-walks had never been even thought of by the present possessors, although seats covered with moss shewed that they had been once frequented, and village tradition told tales of lovers' meetings in other days amidst those labyrinths.

Matilda alone, in idle mood, penetrated thither ; and here, beneath the moonlight gliding to the wood with a stealthy step, which, though he condemned himself for it, he could not desist from—Vaughan often met Matilda Bonham.

But an end was to be put to this for a time. Lord Kidwelly, who had been a good deal absent, began to think it was advisable he should take his daughters to London. While he was meditating how to accomplish this, an opportunity started up. An aunt of his, Lady Penrhyn, with whom he had been at variance for years, herself proposed a reconciliation, and told him that hearing his daughters were both fine looking girls, she would be happy to introduce them into society, if he would allow them to visit her. It was the thought alone of their motherless condition, and a desire to benefit them, that had induced the old lady to make those

overtures, as she had never liked him from a boy.

Glad of such an opportunity of setting them off in the world, Lord Kidwelly arrived at Bonham Park just at a moment when he was not expected, intending to take his daughters to London in the course of a month. He came thither in great spirits. Lady Penrhyn, who was very rich, had, as if to put a seal to their reconciliation, given him a draft to a large amount on her banker, which enabled him to free himself from some pecuniary difficulties. Among others to pay Miss Woolaston, the governess, the long arrears of salary he owed her, and to dispense entirely with her services. This lady—true to prudent determinations, the offspring of intense selfishness—had been blind and deaf to what was going on with regard to Matilda, and did not even give Diana a hint to enlighten her upon the subject.

Although made the constant companion of Diana, and treated with civility by Matilda, there was no tie of friendship between them.

Her residence in the family had been long, and, as far as outward appearances and a skill in various accomplishments went, they had profited by it. But the faults that in their young days might have been weeded out, had but taken deeper root under her cold touch. The finer feelings had been destroyed. A greater induration of the marble heart, an increase of the self-willedness and pride of the bold Diana; and an encouragement of the sickly sensibility glossing over the love of self in the softer Matilda, and hiding her passion for the show and trappings of the world, had been the fruits of her tuition.

Friendship could not exist between beings so heartless and their adieus, outwardly warm, had no more of reality in

their protestations, than the will-o'-the-wisp has of heat.

Miss Woolaston went, and her name was no more mentioned, than if she had never been associated with the family.

CHAPTER VIII.

“ But absent, what fantastic woes aroused,
Rage in each thought by restless musing fed.”

THOMPSON.

LORD KIDWELLY, wishing to make himself popular, gave several dinners at Bonham Park to which the Vaughans, Mr. Parry and a few other inhabitants of the village were invited. Many guests, who did not mind a long drive through cross roads, came from a distance, and as he had brought two or three friends, this time, with him from London, the house was constantly full.

Vaughan and Matilda saw each other even more frequently than before, though their opportunities of conversing were less, and the added brilliancy which dress and ornaments gave to Matilda's personal appearance, the soft fascination of her manner, the glance in what Vaughan thought he read the fullest acknowledgment of her preference for him, subjugated him daily more and more, and made him see nothing in the world but her.

Yet, notwithstanding all this, he did not feel happy. His altered manner, his reveries and thoughtfulness gave his sister a great deal of uneasiness. She did not penetrate the secret of his heart, and knew not how to account for his changed demeanour.

Emily, more clear-sighted, secretly rejoiced that the Misses Bonham were soon to go away, and to be absent for some months. She did not like either of them.

Matilda was not worthy of Vaughan. Who was?—she thought, and the tear started into her eye—certainly no one she had ever seen. Love improves many men but not all. There was so much condemnation of himself mixed with his reflections that it often made Vaughan gloomy when at home.

Those secret meetings with Matilda, though passionately sought for, weighed upon his spirits.

Honorable and open in every thing else, was it honorable to seek stolen interviews with a young girl whose father would never bestow her hand on him?

Another circumstance which sprung up all at once added to his uneasiness.

A Mr. Delville, a young man of immense fortune, but unprepossessing in appearance, wearisome in conversation, vain and an egotist, was one of those who accompanied Lord Kidwelly from London,

and still continued to remain at the house after the other guests had departed. He was evidently struck by Matilda's beauty, and her sudden coquettishness with him, although she ridiculed him when he was not present, gave Vaughan the most profound vexation.

It is true, he felt re-assured, when, beneath the shade of the forest trees, she by turns, laughed, wept, and protested away his suspicions. Yet he loved too fondly not to be jealous, and during her absence, rumours of Mr. Delville's continued attentions, which found their way into the village, roused his uneasiness again, and he fell into oppressively low spirits. His temperament, like that of most clever people, was highly nervous.

The conduct of the periodical became wearisome to him, and, without Emily's assistance he would never have been able to get through it. She, secretly devoted

to him, although unconscious of the power he exercised over her, redoubled her exertions, and read to him, and wrote for him all the day.

Winter had set in, a gloomy winter, rain and fog without ceasing. A cold which Vaughan had caught in the early part of it, settled into a troublesome cough and gave his sister much uneasiness.

He no longer liked going out to the evening parties in the village, music had no charms for him. Matilda's voice was not there, and Mr. Parry vainly tried to interest him in the lectures at the Institution. The cough served as an excuse for all.

Emily was ingenious in inventions to divert his thoughts during the long evenings. All the powers of her mind seemed called into action. There was no subject that she fancied would interest him on which she did not endeavour to converse,

setting aside her natural bashfulness, and thinking only of him—and as her reading was extensive, and her memory good, her information often surprised him, and her play of wit would sometimes draw him from himself.

Still his thoughts always reverted to Matilda.

Emily—her mind and natural talents expanding beneath his eye, the result of the cultivation he had bestowed on them, was a dear sister, to whom he could have opened his heart and poured forth his love, his doubts, and fears, were she not still, in his opinion, almost a child.

He often caught himself saying mentally, ‘If Matilda had such just ideas on this subject,’ or ‘would she were so untainted by the world,’ when Emily, all animation and intelligence, poured forth the pure thoughts and lofty sentiments of an unsophisticated mind. But then he

would start, check himself and add with a sigh, ‘but lovely and fascinating as Matilda is, she would then be too perfect for this earth.’

Matilda had thrown a spell over him—the spell of an enchantress, and the last interview they had, when they reiterated their vows upon the tomb of a Vaughan, fastened the chain that bound him to her with an adamantine clasp.

They had met in the church-yard the night before Matilda’s departure. It was about ten o’clock. The inmates of Bonham Park were, most of them engaged at cards, and Diana was in the midst of a game of chess with Mr. Delville, when Matilda left the house unnoticed by any one, and passing quickly through the shrubberies, entered the wood. The door communicating with the church-yard was soon reached, and within it she found Vaughan waiting for her.

They had arranged to meet there for five minutes.

Vaughan, beside himself at the idea of parting with her, did the very thing he had determined not to do, obtained a promise that she would receive his letters, and answer them, a promise which no scruple on her part prevented her from giving.

She thought she loved Vaughan, and perhaps she did as well as she could love any one, when, kneeling in that old church-yard, she vowed never to give her hand to another.

CHAPTER IX. *

“Yes! ’tis the eternal law, that where guilt is,
Sorrow shall answer it.”

TALFOURD.

“Hubert, do you ever intend to work up your journal, as you said you would, or are you going to let it lie by entirely? Would it not do for this magazine?”

“Yes, no, it might answer, certainly, Emily, but it would take up a great deal of time to dress it—most of it is very carelessly written,” he replied in a languid tone.

“I do not think so,” said she, “some of it may, but not all. The beginning of it, which you wrote out when you reckoned upon one of the periodicals accepting it, is very prettily written. However, I should like to know if you think of publishing it?”

“You flatter me, Emily, you are a partial judge. If it is worth any thing, I think I should rather sometime or other make a book of it. One good-sized volume with half a dozen views might sell; but why do you ask me if I shall ever publish it?”

“Oh, because there is an incident related in one of the letters you wrote to aunt Penelope from D—— that I think would make a good foundation for a novel if you did not want to preserve it in the journal as it is.”

“Yes, I recollect to what you allude, though I almost forget the particulars

now. I dare say you are right, it would make a good foundation, but I do not know if I shall attempt a novel. it requires a good deal of imagination—more than I possess at present. Suppose you try it yourself, Emily. I will give you leave to make what use you can of that part of the journal, and will endeavour to help you if you are at fault.”

“Impossible,” said Emily almost trembling, “I dare not attempt it.”

“You do not know what you are capable of until you try.”

“Indeed, indeed I cannot, it would be quite beyond me.”

“At all events we will read the narrative over,” replied he, “and consider its capabilities. I have not a very clear remembrance of it, so many years have passed since I wrote it. If you would have the patience to hunt out the letter that contains it, you might read it for me

now. You will find letters and journal tied up with a red tape in yonder drawer."

Emily searched for the papers with a nervous hand, and a feeling of disappointment.

"Ah, I thought it might engage his attention, and divert his melancholy," she mentally exclaimed, "and now he wishes to make me set about it. How unhappy he looks! Any employment that could give constant occupation to his mind would be of use to him. If he insists upon my trying to make a novel out of this story, I fear I must comply. He does not bear contradiction, and he used to be so good tempered. I must endeavour to give him so much trouble about it as may induce him to take it into his own hands, otherwise my suggestion will be of no service. But what will aunt Penelope say if she finds me drawn into writing a novel! I must tell her candidly that I thought it might amuse him."

Such were some of Emily's reflections as she separated the papers, and searched for the required letters. Like most things sought for, they were the last that came to hand.

Tying up the remainder she brought them to Vaughan, who, interested for the moment, bade her read them aloud for him while he rested himself in the arm chair.

Thus desired she read as follows.

Early in the autumn of 183— I found myself domiciled in an old château in the romantic town of D— in the *Cote du nord*. My apartments looked into what is now a wilderness of fruit and flowers, but what must have been, in the days of its ancient Lords, a beautiful hanging garden, and across that into the lovely valley of the Rance, long celebrated in the poetical and romantic annals of Bretagne.

It was a study for a painter; whether the mist of morning enveloped the valley,

like a sea, and, slowly dispersing, gradually unveiled its deep glens and wooded heights, its green knolls, and sparkling waters, with the fortifications and embattled walls of the town, church spires, and ivied gate ways, and towers standing on the overhanging cliffs, all half hidden by the wreaths of vapour which hung round them; or the eye wandered over the fair scene, in the splendour of an autumnal day, with that clear, cloudless sky, which we so seldom see in England.

The season for the gay balls at the fountain was over. No longer coloured lamps hanging from the thick branches of the trees mingled their lights with the pale beams of the moon, while groups of all ranks glided through the mazy dance, and the echo of the valley resounded with the voice of mirth. It was all silent now, and the evening song of the birds was alone heard as we sometimes made our

way through a precipitous path, which winding down the side of the mountain amidst thickets of odoriferous shrubs, conducted into that part of the valley in which is situated the fountain *des eaux minerales*. At other times we took more extensive rambles in the surrounding country, and visited several of the romantic ruins scattered around. The château we inhabited was an extensive pile of buildings, once the point of re-union to the many noble families who formerly resided in that part of Bretagne, but several of whom had lost their name and place in society during the civil wars which had so long devastated France, and still more recently in the revolutionary struggles, while others, returning with diminished fortunes to the abodes of their ancestors, contented themselves with living in privacy and retirement.

The château had long passed away from

its ancient possessors, and on the parquettèd floor of the *salle a manger* were still to be seen the impressions made by the horses' hoofs in the time of the revolution, when occupied as a barrack by a party of republican cavalry. Many a tale its old walls could have told of the deeds of chivalry of Bertrand du Guesclin and Olivier de Clisson, of de Laval, de Rohan, de Beaumanoir, and de Dinan—of fair princesses and noble dames, with legends of those days when the Dukes of Bretagne and still later, the good Duchess Anne, kept their court in the lofty donjon of the town—and darker histories of blood-shed, captivity, and death. But those days were long gone by, and strangers now dwelt peacefully within its walls, sometimes examining with curiosity the sombre passages and secret chambers, where fancy might paint some unhappy proscribed noble, secreted for years, or gaily assem-

bled round the piles of wood which blazed on the antique hearth, talked over the occurrences of more peaceful times.

A melancholy circumstance which had occurred a short time before my arrival, was then the topic of conversation among both the French and English inhabitants, and being interested in the details, and anxious to get at the truth of the story, I happened to ask some questions one day of an old gentleman with whom I was taking a stroll in the valley.

“I too well know,” said he with a sigh, “all the incidents of this unfortunate history—suppose we ascend *Mont Parnasse* and seat ourselves under the shade of yonder clump of trees, I will then tell you all the particulars of it.”

We accordingly turned our steps into a narrow pathway that led to the spot to which he had pointed, and in a few moments were seated on the edge of the

precipice. It was about mid-day. The woods tinted with their brightest autumnal foliage, looked beautiful under the influence of an October sun. The Rance sparkled far beneath our feet.

On one side the town of D—— whose decaying walls and crumbling turrets bear evidence to its strength and importance in feudal times, and still give interest and picturesqueness to its appearance, looks down on the valley from the height of the rock on which it is situated; and on the other, rise steep precipices, partially clothed with wood, with here and there an old château displaying its time-worn walls.

The old man paused for a few minutes as we gazed upon the lovely scene around us, and then related to me the following narrative, which I have written down as nearly as I can recollect them, in his own words.

Many years ago there resided on the banks of the Tivy in South Wales, near the ancient castle of Kilgerran, a gentleman of some fortune whom we shall call Colonel Stanley.

He had seen a great deal of service in the early part of his youth, and afterwards, leading rather a dissipated life in London, had spent a great portion of his patrimonial inheritance, but at the age of eight-and-forty, marrying a rich city heiress, he retired to the abode of his ancestors with the determination of passing the rest of his days, in the enjoyment of a country life, and a handsome competence.

I was then residing in the neighbourhood, and became intimately acquainted with him. He had two children, Harry, the unfortunate hero of my story, and Julia, three years younger. They were both engaging, intelligent, high-spirited

little creatures, but much spoiled from over indulgence, particularly Harry, who was the idol of his father.

Very early were the seeds sown, of that deep seated and intense selfishness, which springing up and increasing with his years, afterwards destroyed the many goodly promises of generous and noble qualities, which appeared in the youth of the boy. Harry was never to be contradicted or thwarted, his will was a law, and he became a petty despot in the family. His pocket too, was always supplied with a profusion of money, which it is true, he was ever ready to divide with others; but though to the superficial observer, he appeared generous, kind, and frank, a more keen sighted person could perceive, that his ruling vice was gratified by this generosity, and that he gave liberally what he did not value. He was always good tempered and gay, while

his wishes were attended to, but contradict him, or cross his pleasures, and his haughty air, despotic temper, and angry retorts, but too clearly shewed the selfish feelings of his heart.

Notwithstanding however, the indulgence of his mistaken parent, and his own idleness, his abilities were of first rate order, and to him, his tasks proved but a diversity of amusement. He seemed to have no need of application, mastering whatever he was put to learn, with an ease and quickness that looked like intuition, and had he been the son of a less wealthy, and less foolishly indulgent father, he would probably, at this moment, have been an ornament to his station and his country.

In the village of Kilgerran, lived a gentleman of the name of Apreece. His family was large, and his fortune very moderate. He had been educated at the

same school with Colonel Stanley, and upon the latter retiring to the country their early schoolboy friendship was renewed, and produced a close intimacy between the families. Mr. Apreece's youngest daughter Caroline, and Julia Stanley, were much about the same age, and became inseparable playmates. As a child, Caroline was so fair and gentle, and of so caressing and endearing a disposition, always yielding to the capriciousness and impetuosity of his temper, that she was a much greater favourite of young Stanley than his sister Julia, who at times would oppose his tyranny and self-will with a spirit that savoured somewhat of his own.

In my fishing excursions, I have often stopped to admire those three lovely children, when attended by an old Welsh nurse, they sought for wild flowers along the foot path, that winding among the

hills, conducts the short way from Cardigan to Kilgerran ; or amused themselves by building little bridges of slates and stones, across the tiny stream that has worked a channel for itself far beneath the venerable castle, forming the ditch on the northern side, and then hastens to lose itself in the waters of the Tivy.

At twelve years old, Harry was sent to Eton, but still at each returning vacation, I perceived that his predilection for his little companion was unabated. Often would he persuade her and Julia to wander with him by moonlight, sometimes to clamber up the height on which stands the extensive ruins of Kilgerran castle, and explore its flights of steps, its numerous winding passages and dark chambers, and then turn to admire its shadow, and the opposite woods of Coedmore, reflected in the clear waters below ; sometimes, to stroll along the banks of the Tivy, and

watch the light corrieles as they glided down its stream in pairs, and applaud the dexterity of the fishermen, who, whenever a lordly salmon struck the net that hung suspended between the two skiffs, crossed each other with the quickness of thought, to entramel it the more securely.

Caroline was a musician by nature, and had a fine taste for drawing, in both of which accomplishments, young Stanley excelled, and as time wore on, and those tastes were developed, his delight was to correct her drawings as she sat under the venerable yew tree, sketching the church of St. Dogmael, and the ruins of the fine old abbey—at other times to shew her the true perspective of the village of Llechryd, as she took a view of it from the small boat in which he rowed her and his sister on the Tivy.

I do not know whether you have ever been at Cardigan. If you have not I can

but ill give you an idea of the romantic and beautiful country surrounding it, endeared to me by many early associations, and where the primitive manners of the inhabitants, excluded in a great measure from much intercourse with their neighbours, present a touching picture of the calm and quiet enjoyments of rural life.

With my fishing rod in my hand, and Isaac Walton in my pocket, I have wandered for hours together, among the charming solitudes of the innumerable valleys which lie hidden among the hills in every direction, or loitered in the narrow pathway worn along the banks of the Tivy, sometimes beneath a ledge of slaty rock almost perpendicular above my head, and in the next moment under the embowering shade of woods, which covering some steep acclivity down to the river's brink, bathed their branches in its sparkling waters. Nor were the visions of ro-

mance and poetry, and the recollections of history wanting for the imagination to revel in. The Princes of Powis had in days of yore, held high festivals and tournaments at their castle of *Abertivy*, to which crowded nobles and knights from many distant lands. But to return to my story—young Stanley had now attained his eighteenth year, and it was time for him to go to college.

His expenses at Eton had been enormous for so young a man, but then his success had been brilliant, and his masters were lavish of the most flattering predictions in regard to his future career, and the fond and proud father was used to say, that young men such as his son ought not to be too much restricted—that Harry was not born to be niggardly—his intimate associates were among the *elite* of the College and that it was impossible for him to rank such men as the young Mar-

quis of B——, and Lord C——, among his friends, without spending more than double the liberal allowance at first assigned to him.

Colonel Stanley likewise, though not very clear sighted in such matters, could not be any longer blind to the growing partiality between his son and the fair Caroline Apreece—a partiality which he beheld with considerable alarm, and he therefore hoped that a longer separation than usual, with new scenes and new pursuits, would soon efface it from the mind of young Stanley.

His prudent foresight, however, came too late, for vows had already been secretly interchanged between the youthful lovers upon the banks of the Tivy, amidst tears on her side, and vows of eternal fidelity on his.

Young Stanley proceeded to college, where his morals, already tainted, became

soon totally wrecked. A more than ample allowance from his too indulgent father enabled him to launch into all the vices and expensive habits which are the ruin of such a number of the young students of our Universities. To these was super-added a love of gambling, that became a passion, and clung to him ever after through life, while the brilliancy of his wit, the fascination of his manners, and his various talents and acquirements, only served as snares to draw him still deeper into the vortex of folly and extravagance.

Meantime some changes had taken place in the little society at Kilgerran. Caroline went to reside with her aunt, Mrs. Miller, in London, where the first masters perfected her fine musical abilities, and fashion added new graces to her attractive person.

As his father had hoped, new scenes and new friends joined to the reckless and dis-

sipated life that he led, had in a great measure effaced her image from the heart of her versatile and unworthy lover, and while she, with a woman's constancy, fondly cherished his remembrance, the form of the fair Welsh maiden scarcely if ever presented itself to his imagination.

Before the completion of his time at the University the fond father of young Stanley died, leaving him in possession of the paternal property, but his mother's fortune being settled on herself, the patrimonial estate was very inadequate to the wants of a young man already much involved. After spending a short time at home to arrange some domestic affairs, which could not be settled without his presence, not seeing, or perhaps even thinking of *her* to whom a short time ago he seemed so fondly attached, he repaired to the continent, and in Paris, plunged at once into all the fashionable vices of that seductive capital,

where he soon got deeply in debt, and was obliged to have recourse more than once to his mother, to free him from his pecuniary embarrassments.

From thence he went to Italy, where he formed a *liaison* with a beautiful singer, and after being made the dupe of her avarice and perfidy, with a fortune totally ruined, and all his resources exhausted, he at length repaired to London, where, though the life and soul of the most fashionable society, he was obliged to depend almost entirely upon his successes at gambling, in which he seemed to be one of the blind goddesses most favored children.

CHAPTER X.

“ Since I left you, mine eye is my mind—”

SHAKESPEARE.

At this period I was staying in London, and visited frequently at Mrs. Miller's house. One morning I called rather earlier than usual, the old lady was employed in knitting, and Caroline was sitting at a little table in the recess of a window, drawing.

“ What are you so earnestly engaged about, Miss Apreece,” I said, after the first salutation was over.

“I am only making a drawing from a very old sketch taken in Wales,” replied Caroline.

I thought she spoke rather pensively, and approaching, I bent over her chair. It was a view of Kilgerran Castle—the time was evening—the light of the moon seemed to stream upon the ruined towers of the ancient edifice, which, thrown out by a dark sky in the back ground proudly rose upon a steep and naked cliff, round whose base wound the dark blue waters of the Tivy, the eye following for a while its course through alternations of thick woods and slaty rocks, while in the foreground a small boat floated on the river containing two or three shadowy figures, indistinct amidst the deep masses of light and shade which surrounded them.

“She has not forgotten him yet,” I mentally exclaimed.

“Do you know” said I softly “that

young Stanley is returned from the continent—that he is in London.”

She dropped her pencil, and stooped for a minute as if looking for it, and when she picked it up again, her face and neck were crimson, and I saw that she could hardly speak from emotion.

“Returned, and in London,” she faintly replied.

After conversing for some time with Mrs. Miller, I approached Caroline again, to take my leave—there were tears on her drawing.

“Shall I bring an old acquaintance to see you?” I said, as I shook hands with her at parting.

She followed me to the door and earnestly whispered, “No, my dear friend, pray do not—do not even mention my name—do not say I am in London.”

It was about three weeks after this conversation, that I accompanied Caroline and

her aunt to a select musical party. It was given by Lady L——, an intimate friend of Caroline, who, though of a very timid, diffident disposition, and always reluctant to sing before strangers, could not in this instance refuse to make one of the many fair amateurs who had promised to exert their musical talents to enliven the evening. Several charming performers were there, but not one to equal Caroline, who united to the most exquisite pathos, a compass and richness of voice which I have never heard equalled, and which was peculiarly calculated to make her excel in the simple style which she usually preferred, always accompanying herself on the harp. This night I thought she had already exerted herself too much, as the entreaties from Lady L—— for several favourite songs had been often and so earnestly repeated, as to render a denial almost impossible, and she was now rising

from the harp and pleading fatigue, when the lively lady Arabella B—— approached with a petition for one song more—only one—the very last—certainly the last song she should sing.

“That is a dear girl,” said lady Arabella, “I want to hear the song which K—— wrote, and which you arranged yourself to an old air. Lady L—— says it is beautiful, and I am dying to hear it.”

Caroline hesitated a moment, but she saw it was useless to try to excuse herself and she began a wild Welsh melody.

The words ran thus

Once more I look upon this spot—
The spot were first we met
And have not absence—time—despair
Yet taught me to forget?—

Oh no !—even here I gaze upon,
The wild stream dashing by,
The tangled path, the dewy flowers
With heedless—listless eye.—

And yet as sweet amid its banks,
The stream flows murmuringly,
And blooms as fair each opening flower
As then——but were is *he*?——

The last verse had hardly died upon her lips when happening to raise her eyes she saw Stanley standing before her. She turned deadly pale, and would have fallen to the ground had I not supported her.

“She has over-exerted herself,” said several voices together, “she was fatigued when Lady Arabella asked her to sing.”

A fair bevy of friends gathered round Caroline, totally unconscious of the real cause of her fainting so suddenly, as was also Stanley himself. He had entered the room at the beginning of the preceding song, and though listening with rapture to the tones of a voice, which, as he afterwards told me, filled his bosom with a vague and indefinable emotion, for which he could not in that moment account, had

hardly caught a glimpse of the performer through the crowd of admiring listeners who surrounded her, and had but just succeeded in making his way to the harp as she fainted away.

I saw, though perfectly motionless and pale, that she had not quite lost all consciousness, and I whispered softly, "exert yourself my child—for heaven's sake exert yourself."

By degrees she revived, and sweetly thanking her kind friends, and making some hurried allusion to a violent headache, brought on by the heat of the room, was overpowered by a thousand compliments on her voice, and regrets for their selfishness in making her sing so much. I could easily perceive that Stanley was struck with amazement on recognizing in the beautiful and accomplished female before him, his once dearly-loved Caroline.

The lovely but unformed girl, I might

almost have said child, whom he had parted from seven years before, with vows and sighs, (alas ! how soon forgotten,) in the wild solitudes of Wales, was now fashioned into the fascinating and graceful woman, retaining still all that charm of engaging softness which had captivated his boyish fancy. He looked as if he had never beheld anything so beautiful, and I saw that fond remembrances of old times came thronging to his soul.

Caroline on her side had now called to her aid every sentiment of womanly pride and delicacy, and veiling the emotions which I know throbbed in her little heart under the utmost coldness and reserve, was able, when I afterwards at Stanley's earnest request, presented him to her as an old, though long-forgotten friend, to receive him with an easy politeness, and a calm indifference, which I perceived threw a shade of disappointment over his handsome countenance.

Stanley was at my lodgings the next day, entreating me to accompany him in a visit to Mrs. Miller. Notwithstanding Caroline's former prohibition, I had no plea for refusing, and on our arrival we found the old lady as usual at her everlasting knitting, while Caroline was employed at an embroidery frame.

She appeared languid and unusually pale, but it only gave a new character to her beauty, and as she still continued her embroidery, and spoke but little, with her long dark lashes resting on her cheek, looking as if pencilled there by the hand of some skilful painter, she had altogether very much the air of one of Raphael's Madonnas.

I soon saw that Stanley was cruelly hurt at a reserve which continued unabated for several weeks, during which time his visits were numerous, and as he paid his court indefatigably to the old lady,

amusing her with a thousand anecdotes of the various people he had met on the continent, and giving her the most animated descriptions of the picturesque beauties of Switzerland, Germany, &c., she gave him a general invitation to her house in the evening, whenever he was disengaged, of which he was not negligent in taking advantage, and as I was mostly of the party I could not help observing Caroline's conduct towards him with some surprise. Every recurrence to former scenes seemed by her to be carefully avoided—all her long treasured sketches in Wales disappeared from her portfolio—the old Welsh airs were no longer seen among her music, and a person who had not studied her countenance from infancy as I had done, would have thought her coldly indifferent to all the attentions of Stanley, but I could not believe it, else why the tears I detected on her drawing when I had first

told her of his arrival. Why the refusal of two unexceptionable matches within the last year—why the ingenuity with which she managed never to see him alone for a moment, but always in the presence of Mrs. Miller or myself? Poor Caroline, yes, she loved him—but she dreaded lest he should discover how faithfully her heart had been true to him for years while he had so soon forgotten her. She dreaded lest a sentiment of honour alone should bring him to her feet; and she did not dare to trust the passionate glances of his eloquent eyes, which so often and so plainly said—Caroline, I love you.

Meantime this engrossing passion had a most salutary effect upon the pursuits and habits of Stanley. His old haunts were quite forsaken. The gaming table was given up. All his thoughts and wishes seemed concentrated on this fair incomprehensible being, and I, whom he knew

had been acquainted with their childish attachment, had now, more than once to listen to his bursts of disappointment at her coldness, or his awakened hopes, when a blush, a word, some passing emotion, or the tones of her voice gave a different colour to his imaginings. At last he told me he could endure this suspense no longer—he must know his fate.

I had been spending a few days in the country with an old friend, and the following morning after my return to town, I called early at Mrs. Miller's house.

I was told that the old lady was a little indisposed, but that Miss Apreece was in the drawing room. I accordingly ascended the stairs, and entering the apartment which I found empty, sat down near a little table covered with books and work, to await Caroline's appearance.

The folding doors were closed which led into a small room where Mrs. Miller

and Caroline generally spent their mornings, and I was startled by hearing a voice which I recognised as Stanley's.

He seemed to be in earnest and passionate discourse with Caroline, and I heard the murmur of her sweet soft accents in reply.

I rose immediately, and gently left the room. All is explained thought I. God grant it may be for their mutual happiness.

I saw Stanley in the course of that day—triumph and joy were in his eye. He seized my hand and exclaimed

“Congratulate me, my dear friend, my lovely bewitching Caroline has consented to be mine.”

I own I did not hear of their approaching union without a pang—a sort of misgiving, and yet with all his faults I loved Stanley. He is still young, thought I, he seems now to have abandoned those reckless, vicious pursuits, from which he has

suffered so much, and which were leading him to inevitable ruin, and a partner so fair and gentle as Caroline, and so calculated from her various acquirements, to give a charm to domestic life, will win him from every dissipated habit, and he will become what nature always intended him to be, the pride and delight of all his friends.

We met almost daily, and he was never weary of talking of Caroline. He spoke of his marriage as arranged to take place in a short time, and mentioned his certainty of obtaining a small sinecure situation through the interest of an old friend of his father. And then his economical projects, and pictures of his fire-side enjoyments, confirmed my warmest hopes that love—real love, had wrought a miraculous change in his character. He had nearly withdrawn himself from all his gay dissipated associates, his mornings and

evenings were spent with Caroline, either at her aunt's house or among their small circle of intimate friends.

They sung, they drew, they walked and conversed together, and seemed almost unconscious that there were any other people in the world but themselves.

But alas, this apparent sunshine was only the prelude to an event which suddenly overwhelming them like an avalanche, buried all their promised happiness beneath it.

One evening Mrs. Miller found herself so indisposed that Caroline was obliged to devote herself entirely to her.

Stanley left the house early, and unfortunately met one of his former companions who after reproaching him with having cut all his old friends, and deserted those scenes in which he used to find so much amusement, invited him to accompany him to a well-known gambling house in St.

James's Street. For a long time Stanley resisted the solicitations of his companion. At length unable longer to withstand the ridicule with which those solicitations were urged, in an evil moment he yielded, inwardly vowing that it should be the last time. Alas, by once yielding to the tempter, by once deviating from the straight path of rectitude, how many vows are broken? how many good resolutions forgotten? how many duties abandoned and neglected?

I heard it by accident the following day as I was walking in Piccadilly. I met Mr. B—— and his first salutation was

“So your friend Stanley won five thousand pounds last night at —” mentioning the name of a noted gambling house, “I happened to look in, and found him at high play with Lord L——, Sir Henry M——, and Mr. ——.”

I was struck as by a thunderbolt—

“Good Heavens,” I explained, “are you in earnest?”

“Quite true,” said he, “Harry is a devilish lucky dog,” and he left me.

I hastened to Stanley’s lodgings, and knocked at the door—it was opened by his landlady, who told me that he had been out all night, but she did not think he had gone to bed, as he was pacing his room all the morning.

I went up stairs and knocked at the door of his apartments—at first there was no answer, but on repeating it I was told to enter. I started back aghast at his appearance. He was deadly pale, with a wild distracted air, and had evidently not been in bed all night.

“My dear friend, you are ill, very ill,” I exclaimed, as I took his hand which was burning hot in mine.

“I am ruined,” he replied, “utterly ruined,” and he struck his forehead violently.

I began to fear for his intellects, and I tried to calm him.

"But you won five thousand pounds last night at ——," I said, "I saw B— this morning and he told me so."

"It is all gone," he uttered in a suppressed tone of voice, "and much more than I can have it ever in my power to pay, and look at that." With these words he handed me an open note, which he had received a few hours before. It was a cold and haughty refusal of the place he had built upon. The gentleman's son had been one of the sufferers at last night's gambling party, which too well explained the contents.

I subsequently learned that after winning money to a large amount, Stanley would have left the table, but the irritated losers insisted in no very measured terms on having their revenge. Fortune now abandoned her favourite, and Stanley lost

not only his winnings, but a very considerable sum besides. It was likewise hinted to me that maddened by the change of luck, he had resorted to some unjustifiable stratagem to turn the tables once more in his own favour, in which he was detected, that very high words had passed, and that he had left the party in a state bordering upon insanity.

The morning after I saw him a duel took place in which his opponent being as was feared, dangerously wounded, Stanley was obliged to fly to the continent.

CHAPTER XI.

“Why didst thou promise such a beauteous day?”

SHAKSPEARE.

ONE half hour of parting with his betrothed love—one melancholy half hour and he was gone.

Caroline was pale, mute, motionless—a dizzy kind of stupor seemed to take possession of her faculties—yesterday the promised bride of Stanley—to-day separated from him as it were by an abyss, of the depth of which his emotion could alone make her sensible.

For two or three months after this, his second eventful separation from Caroline, he continued to write to her punctually, painting in the most glowing and passionate terms his despair at being forced to leave her, but always alluding to a hope of their meeting at some future period. Stanley's however was a character so entirely selfish that he could not be bound by any feeling of constancy. Habituated almost from the moment of his birth to self-indulgence and gratification, when he met Caroline in London, it was this very feeling rather than a nobler sentiment that won him for a time from his vicious and dissipated pursuits ; and seeing her, an object of general attraction and admiration wherever she appeared, made him eager to bear off such a prize, and gave his earnest and devoted attentions the semblance of, if they had not the truth of constancy.

By degrees Caroline heard from him

less frequently ; and at length, after gradually changing into short, cold, and unsatisfactory letters, apparently written in great haste, the correspondence ceased entirely.

I now lost sight of him for five or six years, and when I did hear mention made of him, it was accidentally by a gentleman who had been travelling on the continent, and it was with sorrow I heard his account, for, alas ! it was but too plain, that the influence excited by Caroline, had been of transient duration, and that Stanley was sinking deeper and deeper, into every vice and excess that can render man contemptible. An instance which I then heard I shall relate.

One autumn he found himself with a companion whose pursuits were similar to his own, at Thun, in Switzerland, about the season when the general assemblage of officers and cadets of the Swiss artillery

meet there, for the purpose of yearly inspection and drill. After gleaning as much as he could, from these young men at small play, he and his friend agreed to proceed on foot to Milan, taking the route by the valley of the Kander, and so over the Ghemmi to Brig. Stanley had always been a lover of the chase, and in a former excursion into Switzerland, he had made himself a good shot with the rifle, where the use of that weapon is so much practised. He now proposed to his companion to sling their rifles, and should a favourable opportunity offer, to have a few days amusement in hunting the chamois. Accordingly they set out, armed each with his rifle, and towards the close of the first day reached Kanderstag. A heavy shower of rain had fallen during the latter part of their walk; and as they stood drying themselves by the fire, in the kitchen of the little inn, they learned that two cha-

mois hunters were preparing to take the mountain that very night in pursuit of game. Here was an opportunity too promising to be neglected, though following close upon the fatiguing walk of the morning, and therefore after taking some refreshment, they prepared themselves for the expedition.

The night was beautiful—a chamois was soon perceived, and they stole upon him with all the wily caution of practised hunters, invigorated by the clear cold air, and forgetful of their past fatigues. Stanley was, however, at last exhausted, and in springing from one rock to another, lost his balance, and was precipitated into a fissure, from which he was with great difficulty extricated by his companions, apparently lifeless, and dreadfully bruised. Upon being conveyed to the inn, it was discovered that though much lacerated from his fall, and unable to move in consequence

of having severely wrenched one of his ankles, life was not extinct ; and as there was no medical aid in the little village, the good pastor who had some slight knowledge of surgery, and who was always their resource in such circumstances, was immediately applied to, and he, with paternal kindness, had him taken to his own dwelling, and attended him with the utmost care and assiduity. Stanley recovered but slowly, and was obliged to remain two or three months under the hospitable roof of the good pastor, while his companion, after ascertaining that except a tedious detention at Kenderstag, there were no serious consequences to be apprehended, pursued his route to Milan.

The pretty cottage of the village pastor lay in a sequestered nook, on a green knoll, surrounded on one side by an orchard, while on the other, the ground sloped down to a fine trout stream, which ran through the valley.

He was a widower, with an only daughter, about eighteen years of age. Adelaide (for such was her name) without being regularly beautiful, was a pretty brunette, with an enchanting artlessness of mind and manner. Gay and happy as the little birds, which filled the orchard with their songs, she managed the domestic concerns of her father's house with skilful housewifery, and elegance and economy vied at his board.

It was not only the state of Stanley's health which induced him to lend a willing ear to the entreaties of his host, to remain at the cottage until he was perfectly re-established, the *naiveté* and sprightlessness of the young Adelaide had captivated his fancy, and while he assisted her to tie up the flowers and arrange the bee-hives in her little garden, it seemed to him as if the golden age had once more revived in those valleys, and that in the

simple and charming Adelaide, all the graces which Gessner had lavished upon his fair ideal Shepherdess, were united. I will not dwell upon the many arts he used to captivate her innocent affections, or how, when most assured of his faith and truth, her pure mind was insulted with the basest proposals; an indignity which she immediately made known to her father, but though Stanley was obliged to leave the village with opprobrium, the young Adelaide never recovered her former gaiety and happiness, and when my informant had last past through the village of Kanderstag, she was fading fast away, like a flower of the field crushed by the ploughshare.

Stanley was now sunk into an adventurer; trying in fact, to subsist by the most unjustifiable means; for, entirely cast off by his mother, who, latterly had not even replied to any demands he made on

her for money, he was literally penniless. At this critical time he met with an old college acquaintance, who was residing in France, and who with that feeling of kindness and good will, which the recollection of an early boyish participation in the various studies and gay pleasures of that period of existence so often awakens, assisted him to the utmost of his ability, and endeavoured to rouse him from the lethargy of mind into which he was fallen, by recalling to his memory those talents and acquirements which had so often enabled him to carry off every prize in college. But what could he do with a reputation blasted on every side, and charged with transactions the most dishonourable to a gentleman?

After revolving a great many plans, his friend advised him to turn his college education to some account, and to go to Manheim, where he would be certain of

obtaining pupils in the classics and mathematics.

How he proceeded we shall presently see—

During those years that had passed since they had parted in London, Caroline's days had been spent in unavailing regrets. Various circumstances had induced her Aunt, Mrs. Miller, to take up her residence in a remote part of France, and Caroline had accompanied her abroad; but she was neither happy nor contented. Notwithstanding the various accounts she had at different times heard, of the reckless career of Stanley—notwithstanding his utter forgetfulness of her, nor the many efforts her good old Aunt made to prevent her mind from continually dwelling upon the past, she was devoured by a secret longing, an ardent wish to know what was become of him, to see him once more. At length

his intimacy with the old college acquaintance mentioned above, and who had lately come to reside in that neighbourhood, brought him to the town of —— and again he crossed the path of Caroline.

They met beneath the pale moonlight, by the clear waters of the fountain—once more Heaven heard his vows of eternal fidelity—vows so often broken, and again Caroline seemed to live over the days of her youth. But though in her heart, the tide of affection was still the same, still deep, pure, unalterable, untinged by a selfish thought, it was not so with Stanley. Time, the dissipated course of life he had been leading, and that deterioration of the better parts of the character, which a long perseverance in degrading and vicious habits must always produce, had rendered him totally incapable of feeling a sentiment of real love ; yet his vanity was flattered, if his heart was not touched by

seeing the beloved of his boyish days, and the choice of his matured manhood, still so truly devoted to him. There was still a spell in her very name—it spoke to his imagination—it was associated with the scenes of his youth—it breathed of his native hills, and again in fancy he roamed with elastic step on the banks of the Tivy, and again he beheld himself possessor of the goodly mansion of his forefathers.

It was after this interview, that according to his friends advice, he took up his residence in Manheim, where he soon obtained several pupils. He now thought if Caroline would become his wife, her musical abilities might be there turned to account, and added to his own exertions, might render them, in some degree, independent; and accordingly he wrote to her such a letter, as would best work upon her feelings, reminding her with the most persuasive eloquence of their long and

early engagement, and concluding by entreating her to meet him at Manheim. Notwithstanding the judicious counsels of her Aunt, Caroline determined to unite her fate with his, and bent upon ruin, very soon after the receipt of his letter, joined him at Manheim, where they were immediately married.

Alas, poor Caroline! how miserably wert thou undeceived! how were the long, the secret, the cherished hopes of thy fond heart blighted! Instead of the passionate lover, the affectionate husband, that thy fancy had painted, to find too late for remedy, that thou hadst united thyself to a man without a principle of religion or honour, to a being too selfish to really care for anything on earth but himself.

For a short time matters went on pretty well at Manheim. Animation and happiness sparkled in Caroline's soft eyes, and as, though no longer in the zenith of her

beauty, she was still very lovely, for some few weeks her attractions enchanted the unworthy Stanley. Their society was courted, their talents admired and appreciated, and they were considered to be an acquisition to both the German and English society—but this did not last long; Stanley, unmindful of the tears of Caroline, and deaf to her gentle entreaties, plunged again into all his former vicious habits, and although she had obtained several pupils on the harp, with a promise of many more, he soon found himself so overwhelmed with debt, that to remain at Manheim was impossible, and he had once more recourse to his Mother, who touched by the thought that the lovely childish playmate of her Julia, was now the partner of her worthless son, relieved them from the pressure of debt, and furnished them with a considerable sum of money, on the express condition that they should never return to England.

They now took up their residence in the little town of St. Brieux, in the West of France, where Stanley's open-hearted, generous college friend was residing with his family.

The money he had received from his mother was by this time expended; but here, through the assistance, and by the recommendation of that kind friend, Stanley was enabled to establish himself as a teacher, and both he and Caroline in a short time had again several pupils, French and English.

But their home was not a happy one. Coldness and neglect, with frequently harshness and incivility on his side, met with floods of bitter tears by poor Caroline, made them both feel the misery of being alone; and the only point on which they seemed to agree, was an endeavour to make their house attractive to others, by frequent entertainments beyond their

means. This extravagance displeased the friends who had assisted them, and were interested in their welfare, and it was only the thoughtless and indifferent who at length sought their society.

This career went on for some months, but it was impossible it could last, and an intrigue which it was discovered Stanley had been carrying on, under very disgraceful circumstances, since his arrival at St. Brieux, completed the general disgust.

His pupils withdrew themselves one by one—every house was shut against him—unpaid bills poured in on every side, and a prison stared him in the face. His home was now intolerable. Caroline treated him with sullen contempt, or overwhelmed him with her tears and reproaches, for disappointment and unhappiness had totally altered her natural sweetness of temper, and she had not

strength of mind sufficient to endure the numerous provocations he had given her ever since they were married, and now penury was added to every other misery.

Plunged into despair, and without any sense of religion to restrain him, the unhappy Stanley determined on suicide.

To accomplish this purpose, he sought one of the many small bays that indent the coast near St. Brieux, and then, with cool premeditation, walked into the sea.

It was low water at the time, and the wind blew strong on the land. When he had advanced a considerable way, his hat was blown off, and he was observed by some boys at play among the rocks, to walk back again, carefully pick up the hat, and then to tie it fast upon his head by passing a handkerchief over the top of it, and from thence under his chin. He then turned round and again wading some distance, was seen by the same children to swim

out a considerable way. They pursued their amusement, and took no further note of Stanley's proceedings.

A few days after, the lifeless body of Stanley was found, with the hat tied on as described by the boys, at no great distance from the spot where he had been last seen.

A year has now elapsed since the dreadful catastrophe, and yet the tears of the ill-fated Caroline flow unceasingly. Time alone, and the consolations of an Almighty Father, can bring balm to her wounded spirit.

As the old man concluded those words, he slowly arose, and pensively descending the hill by the steep path, which seemed almost suspended over the clear waters of the Rance, we reached the valley in silence where he hastily bade me adieu, apparently much affected by the sad history he had related, whilst I returned home by the ruined monastery of Lehon.

CHAPTER XII.

Books are but formal dullness, tedious friends.

THOMSON.

“You are right, Emily, this story will make a novel,” said Vaughan, when Emily had finished reading the manuscript. “I forgot that I had gathered together so many particulars—we will set about it at once—in short we will write it between us—do not start thus, and colour, you are quite equal to it.”

“How many volumes must we write?”

said Emily, a little re-assured at the idea of the partnership.

“There must be three,” he replied, “the publishers insist upon it.”

“Three!—why must there be three?”

“I cannot tell, Emily—It seems strange to measure the interest of a tale by its size—But the circulating libraries will not take books unless they are in three volumes.”

“A novel in one volume is pronounced unreadable, and two volumes do not share a much better fate.”

“I do not understand it,” replied Emily, “it seems so odd!”

“But there is plot enough in this melancholy story, to weave three volumes out of it—at least I think so,” “I think so too,” said he.

Emily candidly told Penelope what they projected, and how the idea had occurred.

Miss Vaughan looked aghast at the mention of the novel. A young girl of Emily's age attempt a novel!

"I knew not I was to have any hand in it," said Emily, deprecatingly, "when I started the subject, I thought it might amuse Hubert—his spirits seem so low!"

"They were not used to be so," observed Miss Vaughan with a sigh, "from his childhood, of a grave, thoughtful turn, he was never dejected; not even when his plans and castles—for he was always building castles—were destroyed. It must be his health. I have done all I could to make him consult Mr. Parry, and explain his ailments, but in vain."

"It is the mind," thought Emily to herself, "I wonder Aunt Penelope does not see it. So clear-sighted at other times, and now so blind!—I know he hears from Matilda Bonham, although his sister is not aware of it, and always after reading her

letters he seems the more melancholy. He distrusts Matilda, and yet he passionately loves her.—strange contrariety !”

Emily’s observations were just.

The correspondence, which Matilda kept up with Vaughan, never fully satisfied his heart. His imagination had surrounded her with every perfection. She was truly the idol of his fancy. Yet his calmer judgment could not help whispering to him that his hopes were built in sand, and that the foundation of his happiness, even if Matilda was constant, must be insecure.

He had often been shocked at the lightness with which she talked of matters, which he had always been accustomed to consider as very serious, and there were glimpses of a levity in her ideas, to be discerned through her letters, which frequently startled him, even at the moment when he perused them with the greatest ecstasy.

He could not help dwelling painfully on these points in her character. He tried to banish his uneasiness, with reflections on her foreign education, and convictions that when united to him, he would be able to set her opinions right.

“It is always the result of an education entirely foreign,” he would say to himself. “It spoils the English woman; in France the sabbath is not esteemed as here. The moral ties do not bind—the most endearing bands are heartlessly broken, and if Matilda was not genuine purity and truth at the bottom, she would be completely spoiled, like her sister Diana, and thousands of others.”

Thus he forced himself to think, but in reality he was not convinced.

The plan of the lovers was to keep their engagement secret for three or four years.

During this time Vaughan, who built

upon literary distinction, was to labor hard in the road which both inclination and natural talents pointed out to him, and, climbing the hill of science bring such fame—aye, and wealth likewise—to add to an old and untarnished name, that Lord Kidwelly would not be able to withstand the prayers and entreaties of his daughter.

It was the dream of an imaginative mind, immersed in books—the thought of a recluse, who has mixed but little in the world, and, looking at it from a distance, thinks of it as it ought to be, not as it is.

An inspiration to elevate his thoughts, incite his industry, and lead him on in the path he had chalked out, Matilda Bonham was to be to him—but he found himself mistaken. Love, jealousy, and distrust so occupied his mind, that his passion did but fetter his fancy, and weigh down his genius.

Meantime the novel was sketched out, and Vaughan really did take some interest in the plan.

He set Emily to work at once, promising at the same time that he would write a good portion of the book himself. The scenery in France, with which he was quite familiar, was to be enlarged upon, and touched up; and he could introduce, with benefit he thought, into the work, various parts of his own personal journal, as being descriptive of the places through which the unhappy Stanley had wandered.

Then the underplot he would take entirely on himself, and he projected conversations on various subjects which might be supposed to spring up naturally among the persons represented.

Encouraged by the interest Vaughan seemed to shew in what was, at first, her suggestion, and delighted that the idea

had struck her, Emily, very willingly began her task.

Although she had composed various short pieces, and could tell a simple tale gracefully, she had never written a love-story. The opening chapters of the book however, were put into her hands, and her sensibility and brilliant imagination enabled her to give the charm of truthfulness to her delineations of early love.

Vaughan read with surprise the pages she submitted to him. Struck with the delicate touches of nature and exquisite portraiture of feeling they displayed he wondered from whence she had stolen such charming imaginings. He did not dream that she had looked into her own heart and drawn the materials from thence.

It was with her, as, is always the case.

Perhaps there was too much of ideality—too much of innocence—too great an approach to the pastoral ages of the world

in the beautiful scenes she depicted in Wales.

But it could not well be otherwise with the writings of a very young girl.

Vaughan read with a smile some of the incidents of early life—the childish sports on the banks of the Tivy.

“How innocent!” he exclaimed, “but we quarrel not with Gessner, for the purity and simplicity of his Idyls—these will be a great variety in this book and that alone constitutes an attraction.”

But the novel was strangely interrupted and annihilated in its commencement.

CHAPTER XIII.

“ And such is human life ; so gliding on,
It glimmers like a meteor——”

ROGERS.

MR. PARRY entered the study early one forenoon, looking rather agitated.

He took the arm chair which was always his place when he interrupted the occupations of Emily and Vaughan—this he sometimes did for a few moments to consult the latter about village matters and the institution. It was a cold day, but the perspiration was standing on his

brow, and he sat silent for a moment or two.

He found Vaughan and his pupil engaged as usual. Vaughan laid down his pen, and looked inquiringly at him; Emily smiled, nodded, and continued writing.

“I had a letter this morning” Mr. Parry said, “from a very old acquaintance—I do not mean very old in years, for though not young, she is not quite that yet, but it is a long time since I knew her first—since she was a child, a pretty, blue-eyed little girl. The purport of the letter is to look for a small cottage for her, or, if not to be had, a lodging in some nice farm house. There is no cottage unoccupied just now, but I have been out to Apjohn’s, and Fanny says they can manage to take her in. I was afraid, as our dear, good Mrs. Benson is there, that there might have been no apartment vacant. But as Mrs. Benson makes one of the family,

boards with them, and spends nearly all her time with Fanny, she says she will give up her neat sitting room for the present, and thus they can accommodate my poor friend. I have just stepped in however, before I write my letter, to ask Emily if she does not think every thing is comfortable at Apjohn's house, and if she ever heard Mrs. Benson complain of any want of attention."

"Oh! never," replied Emily, "grand-mamma Benson says Fanny is like a daughter to her, and always so gentle and amiable. I go very often to see grand-mamma, and if there was anything amiss, I must be acquainted with it."

"Yes, my dear, you certainly must. Indeed I was quite assured of the comfort of the arrangements myself. Fanny Apjohn is the model of a farmer's wife in my opinion. Still I thought I should like to ask you before I engaged the lodgings.

Poor Caroline! she has lived several years abroad, and has now, she writes me, made by her musical compositions and her drawings (for she is quite an artist) added to a small annuity settled on her by her husband's friends, sufficient to enable her to spend the remainder of her days in quiet and retirement. She will be truly an ornament to our society here."

"Yes, a lady so accomplished would indeed be an ornament" observed Vaughan "but the distance she will be at from Llanluyd must preclude her moving much in the society of the place."

"I am sorry she will not be in the village," said Emily.

"Her residence in the country, will, I hope, be only temporary," returned Mr. Parry, "I think I know of a cottage that may be made to suit her. I want your opinion on it by and by, Vaughan—we will walk there together in the afternoon

and see what alterations it requires, but at present I do not see how I can do better than place my poor friend with the Apjohn's. Hers has been an eventful life; still I trust her last years have flowed on peacefully, and that many more await her here. My father knew all the particulars of her history—he was in France, though not exactly on the spot, when her unfortunate husband put an end to his own existence. It grieved him to the heart, for he had seen them both grow up from childhood.”

“Put an end to his own existence!” exclaimed Vaughan, “what a strange coincidence! The lady’s name, Caroline, is the same as that of the heroine of a story I heard when I was at D——. It was of a Mr. and Mrs. Stanley.”

“Stanley, yes, that is the lady’s name,” said Mr. Parry, “you were at D—— then at the time of that dreadful affair at St. Brieux.”

“No, not at the time,” returned Vaughan, “but very soon after. There were a thousand stories in circulation at D—— relative to it—various versions as there always are, but I think I heard the true one from an old gentleman whom I met when strolling one day into the country. He said he knew the parties from childhood.”

“Ah! that must have been my dear father,” exclaimed Mr. Parry, “it could be no other—he went to D—— for his health, and did not live very long after you saw him there. I remember how he wrote me from D——, how he had met with a young Englishman in one of his walks who asked him some questions about the death of the unfortunate Stanley, and that he had minutely related to him the melancholy story of poor Caroline in which he seemed much interested.”

“True, I was deeply interested by his recital,” returned Vaughan.

“Did you only meet with my father that once? He was a fine looking old man—was he not? you would never suppose he was so ailing.”

“He was indeed a handsome, venerable old man,” replied Vaughan, “but he did not appear strong. No, we never met again. I was travelling with a pupil, and we made but a short stay at the various spots we visited.”

There was a pause for a moment or two.

“My mother was a bosom friend of Mrs. Apreece,” resumed Mr. Parry, thoughtfully, “and they used to build various castles in the air which all fell to the ground. Old people often build castles as well as young ones, Miss Emily,” he continued, looking at Emily with a faint smile.

Emily laid down her pen.

“You do not call writing, building castles, Mr. Parry,” she returned with a

laugh, "how can you tell I ever build castles? Sometimes I do build a castle to be sure, and to tell you the truth I am building one at this present moment. I am building upon the pleasure I shall experience in making Mrs. Stanley's acquaintance. I have been reading the incidents of her life lately, in Hubert's journal, and have become so interested about her! and now I shall see her in reality."

"How curious you should have her story written in your journal, Vaughan!" said Mr. Parry, rather uneasily, "do you think of publishing the journal?"

"Not at present, certainly," returned Vaughan, "and you may depend if ever I do I will suppress the names, and disguise the circumstances—if I do not leave it out entirely—the strangest part of it is, that we have just been at work on a tale founded on it—but now as we are to make the acquaintance of the lady ——"

“For heaven’s sake, my dear friend, do not write anything that can wound the feelings of the most charming woman in the world!” exclaimed Mr. Parry, with energy.

“I would not do that on any account,” said Vaughan, “and ——”

“It would be agony to me,” said Mr. Parry, “if it should fall into her hands!”

“No, no, do not be afraid, dear Mr. Parry,” exclaimed Emily, “we are but in the commencement—there are only three or four of the first chapters written—that part fell to my share—we will go no further,” and she turned her eyes towards Vaughan.

“Agreed, quite agreed,” said he “we will go no further—our novel falls to the ground.”

Mr. Parry took up his hat—he was too much moved to speak, and shaking Emily and Vaughan cordially by the hand, he left the room.

“Our dear, kind old bachelor, Mr. Parry, must have been in love himself one of those days,” thought Emily.

CHAPTER XIV.

“ By that voice beguiled,
Thou wilt salute old memories as they throng
Into thy heart.”

WORDSWORTH.

MRS. STANLEY arrived at Llanluyd. Years had passed since Mr. Parry had seen her, a beautiful girl, on the banks of the Tivy.

The friendship which had existed between their parents, brought them in early days much together; perhaps feelings might have been cherished in boyhood by

him, which, crushed in the bud, when he saw her preference for another, made him always think of her with interest.

But, if it were so, the secret was known only to himself, as he had never revealed it to any one. It is certain, however, that he had all along bitterly deplored her misfortunes.

Entering early into his profession, and removed from the scenes of boyhood, he and Stanley saw little of each other after they left school, but he knew Stanley's faults, and never thought he was worthy of Caroline Apreece.

She too he had never seen since her girlhood.

Now they met when no longer young, each bringing pleasant dreams to the other of the days of youth—joyous days!—of family meetings and country sports, buoyant spirits and hopeful hearts; it was living over the brightest hours of life

again, in Mr. Parry's mind, to behold Caroline.

The apartments at Llewellyn Apjohn's received the stranger for a few months, by the end of which time the cottage was quite in order, which Mr. Parry had fixed on for her, and which, though humble in appearance, he had got the owner to make very commodious by a few well planned additions and alterations.

When her harp and piano, her books and drawings were in it,—although beneath a low, thatched roof—her little sitting room had an air of elegance, which more courtly apartments often want.

Miss Elmour looked upon her with greater interest than she had ever done upon any inhabitant of the village—"she, like myself, has disappointments to deplore," she thought;—and the rigid faces of the Misses Tourteville relaxed into a grim smile as they made inquiries of Mr.

Parry relative to her connections, and asked what were the Stanley arms?

Nat Walton said she must have been a fine woman, and whispered something about fifty years ago, which set Miss Lizzy Roberts in a titter, particularly as he accompanied his remark with a couplet on 'the reckless hand of time,' made on the instant.

In short all the inhabitants of Llanluyd welcomed this addition to their society.

Mrs. Stanley was pleased with the reception she met with in the village, but among all her new female acquaintances none attracted her so much as Emily Hume.

The mind that has had sore struggles through life frequently finds more pleasure in converse with the young—fresh, free, revelling in hopes not yet blasted, in expectations not yet quenched—than in that of the way-worn spirits of those who have

battled like itself; and Emily, knowing her history, pitying her misfortunes, and admiring her talents, shewed so much eagerness in their first meetings to cultivate her friendship, that Mrs. Stanley was immediately won upon.

During the time she remained at the Apjohn's farm house, she had frequently seen Emily, who, constant in her grateful attentions to Mrs. Benson, never failed walking over two or three times in the week to see her.

Dear, good Mrs. Benson, far advanced in life, enjoyed a green old age. Happy in the thought that she had been made the instrument under divine providence, of bringing Emily in the way of her kind benefactors, she had soon reconciled herself to a separation from her. She felt that Emily was in her proper place, but knew, from the proofs of unchanged affection lavished on her by this beloved child, that

she would be always in her eyes, grand-mamma Benson.

Mr. Parry, too, frequently walked to Apjohn's farm, while Mrs. Stanley was there. He almost always took Emily with him, whom he looked upon as having a claim upon his heart, and viewed with a true paternal feeling.

"Dear child," he would say to himself, "how fortunate that I sent her poor mother down here to die ! Good Mrs. Benson could never have educated her properly."

Yet he was sometimes puzzled to know if Emily was quite happy where she was.

"She ought to be so," he would reflect, "for she is really a sister to Vaughan, and Miss Penelope is warm in her praise ; yet there is something the matter with her that I do not quite understand," and then he used to look at her with his doctor's eye, fearful lest decline, her father's and mother's ailment, might lurk in her system.

But the pure tint, rose and lily duly mixed—the clear eye—the agile frame, told of perfect health.

“Truly she ails nothing,” he would say “although her colour changes like the varied tints of a shaded silk, and then at times that little start and sigh—and often so grave! she wants air and variety, that is it. Books! books! books! always books. Vaughan keeps her at her pen and books too much. And Miss Penelope, who never cares to go beyond the garden, thinks if she pokes at the flower-beds like herself, it is exercise enough. Such stuff! Emily ought to walk miles every day. I shall always ask her to walk with me when I go to see Caroline, who I am glad to find has taken a fancy to her. What a charming wife she would make for a young clergyman. If I had a son it would be my pride to see her married to him—and so unaffected too with all the book-learn-

ing Vaughan has crammed into her head—more than sufficient, I am sure, to turn any other girl's brains."

Thus Emily saw much of Mrs. Stanley before that lady came into the village to reside, and always returned from the farm with renewed bloom on her cheek.

Her mornings were spent as usual in the study with Vaughan, but in the afternoons he no longer sought for her to walk with him as he used to do.

It seemed to her as if he preferred solitude.

"He wishes to meditate on Matilda," she thought, "and yet he returns from his lonely rambles more dejected than before."

This idea always gave her a pang, but she stifled the sigh, and dashed away the tears as they rose.

Kind to her as ever, notwithstanding his engrossing passion, Vaughan would most probably have proposed to Emily to

accompany him if she had no one else to walk with, but now that Mr. Parry called for her so often in order that she might cultivate the friendship of Mrs. Stanley, he made an excuse of it to himself for indulging his melancholy mood.

He would say to himself—

“Those walks to the farm house will do Emily much more good than moping with me and trying to keep up my spirits—with woman’s tact the dear girl reads my heart, and the innocent endeavours of this sister of my soul to enliven me, draw still closer the ties of fraternal affection by which I am bound to her—bound since I first beheld her, a lovely child at Miss Winny Toms’s School. Sweet Emily—she has more than fulfilled her early promise, in mind and person. A year ago I did not think she would be so beautiful as she certainly is now—second only in loveliness to Matilda. Matilda is pre-eminent,

both in beauty and fascination of manner. Even that dash of coquetry which makes me so unhappy, becomes her. I would she had it not though—and there are many points in which I wish she more resembled Emily, yet, alas! I feel I love even her faults—I often fear there is no stability in her—Yet why torment myself thus? O power of imagination, thou art my greatest torment—ever haunting me with doubts and fears—ever bringing visions of disappointment before me!

Would that I had never seen Matilda!”

How little does the world know what the man devoted to the imaginative portion of literature often has to suffer! Fancy, the plaything of early days—as life flies on, and the realities of existence exert their influence—becomes, in proportion to its intensity, the mighty engine of unhappiness.

The faculty of calling up vivid pictures which—sported with in idealities made a fair world of shadows, passing and repassing in never ending succession—takes possession of a mind powerless to resist, and wears it out with the strength and tenacity of the action with which it works on the hopes and fears of the possessor, and the multiplicity of the portraitures it brings before his view.

What if they be but shadows—still they haunt him to the death.

CHAPTER XV.

“How beautiful the yesterday that stood
Over me like a rainbow! I am alone.
The past is past. I see the future stretch
All dark and barren as a rainy sea.”

A. SMITH.

THE apple blossoms had begun to peep forth, and the boys and girls of the hamlet, near which the Apjohns dwelt, might be seen to stop in their walks and watch, over the low edge which encompassed the trimly kept church-yard, the opening buds of an apple tree trained to an espalier that skirted one side of an humble grave.

No memorial marked it but the clumps of primroses which covered it, and the dwarf apple tree trained into an espalier.

As Mr. Parry and Emily proceeded to the farm-house one afternoon, they deviated from the usual path which took them to the valley that Emily might have the pleasure of seeking in the hedgerows for some wild-flowers, of which no spot in Wales afforded a greater variety—to carry to Mrs. Stanley, who had a taste for botany.

This varied their walk, and brought them through a meadow, at the end of which a path ran outside part of the hedge enclosing the pretty burial ground, and then over a wooden bridge crossing a small stream, and so into the valley.

A little urchin of three or four years old, had climbed the hedge, and was intently looking into the church-yard.

“You will fall and hurt yourself, my

little fellow," said Emily, "what are you examining so earnestly?"

"Looking at Cary's grave," lisped the child, "the apple blossoms are coming out."

"What apple blossoms," said Emily, "and which is Cary's grave?"

"There!" returned the boy, pointing with his finger.

"And who was Cary, that she has such a pretty grave?" asked Emily.

"Don't know," said the little boy, "only it is Cary's grave, and we watch the apple blossom."

"Is she long dead?" inquired Emily.

"Don't know," returned the child, "the apple blossoms were there last year, and the year before, and always. Nobody would pull them—they fall on the grave, and the apples fall too."

"And is this all you know about it, my

little friend?" said Mr. Parry, taking the boy off the hedge—then stroking his curly head, and chucking him under the chin.

"Yes—all," said the child, "it is Carry's grave."

"We will ask Mrs. Apjohn," said Emily.

"Fanny will be sure to know," observed Mr. Parry, "there must be something of interest connected with it."

A few halfpence to the boy made him run away quite happy, and as they looked after him, they perceived two or three young people further on, standing on tip-toe to get a view over the hedge, and pointing to the apple tree.

As they approached the farm-house they perceived those they came to see assembled outside it.

There was a bright sun, and Mrs. Benson, who could not move about much, was

seated under the shelter of the porch, with her knitting needles in her hand. Caroline just returned from a stroll in the fields was standing beside her, talking; and Fanny holding up her gardening apron had it filled with pears from her winter store.

After the first salutations Emily began to inquire about Cary's grave.

"Do you know anything of the death of her who sleeps there, Mrs. Apjohn? why is the apple tree planted beside her grave? and why do the children watch its blossoming?"

"Poor Cary, did you never remark her grave before, Miss Hume? I think that apple tree is always the first out in blossom—not a child in the neighbourhood would pluck either blossom or fruit, they look upon them as something sacred."

"Indeed," ejaculated Mr. Parry.

"But why so?" said Emily, eagerly,

"I scarcely ever come that way, and never particularly looked into that end of the churchyard before—I should like to know what history is attached to the spot, do you know it?"

"Oh, yes, Miss Hume," replied Fanny, "the incidents connected with poor Cary's death occurred the same year I was married. I thought every one was acquainted with them. I am sure you must have heard the story, Sir," turning to Mr. Parry, "if so simple a tale can be called a story. Every child in the hamlet knows it."

"Very likely, Fanny," returned Mr. Parry with a smile, "but though I often pay a visit to this farm house, I do not pass through the hamlet, and should not have seen the burial ground to-day but that we made a circuit. A great many things happen in your hamlet that we never hear of at Llanluyd, so we must turn to you for information about Cary's grave."

"We should all like to hear it Mrs. Apjohn," said Mrs. Stanley "and if you can spare time pray tell it to us now."

"Yes, we will sit here in the porch," said Emily, "so pray begin."

Fanny looked at Mr. Parry, who gave an approving nod, and seated himself on the bench, motioning her to take a place beside him.

Thus encouraged, Mrs. Apjohn began her narrative in nearly the following words.

"Cary Liddon and Gerrard Benny were the pride of the hamlet. Boy and girl together at school, they had formed an early attachment, and for ten years had been constant to each other. When a pretty little fair-haired girl, he had carried her books to school, and always waited to accompany her home. Older grown he had hoarded his pence to buy her fairings; helped her to bring home the cows; strolled with her

on Sunday evening and holiday time, and, wet or dry, walked with her to church. They had picked the blackberries and the hazel-nuts, and sought for the earliest snow-drops and the first May together for many a returning season, and were considered as patterns of true love in the village.

Sometimes in the summer evenings they would seat themselves beneath the shade of an apple tree in old Liddon's garden—known from its first planting as 'Cary's apple tree.'

Here Gerrard had formed a rustic seat for her, in some of his spare hours, of the unbarked branches of a young oak which had been torn up in a neighbouring field, by a violent storm, and planted clumps of perriwinkles and violets at the foot of it.

Frequent were their innocent conversations in this spot, now, most probably of their future plans, for when Gerrard was

out of his time (he was bound to a blacksmith) and his father should set him up in business, Cary was to be his wife.

It had been consented to by the old people of both families, who were small farmers.

How charming was the last evening they sat under the apple tree, although it was yet early spring, and the blossom was not burst forth !

It was one of those mild days in February which we sometimes have in this island. How light were their hearts ! the apprenticeship had just expired. An old man who worked in the garden heard them speak thus,

“It is now ten years, is it not Cary, since I helped you over yon stile ? A pretty little maid you were then, Cary, but not half so pretty as now.”

“Yes, Gerrard, it is just ten years ago,” replied Cary, blushing, “it was so kind

of you to take notice of me, such a wee thing as I was."

"It was your birth-day, was it not?" Gerrard said.

"No, the day before—I was nine years old the day before—the day this apple tree was planted. Aunt Joan gave it to me for a birth-day present."

"And how well it has flourished, and what a beautiful tree it is!" said the young blacksmith, "I often think it resembles you, Cary."

"How does it resemble me? How can you make that out Gerrard?" said Cary, laughing.

"In sweetness and beauty," returned he, looking fondly at her. It is the most graceful apple tree in the garden, so is Cary the most graceful of all the maidens in the village. Its delicate pink blossom is like Cary's lovely complexion—the deep shade is her lip—the paler is her cheek—

the pure white is her skin—the ——”

“Stop, stop,” said Cary, interrupting him.

“The fragrance is her breath.”

“No, no, Cary exclaims, “Gerrard, you must not tell me any more nonsense.”

“May I not speak of my own,” said Gerrard, looking tenderly at her, “to-morrow I shall ask my father about setting me up in business, and then I shall ask Cary’s father for my wife—is not that the way, Cary?”

She was going to say something playful—perhaps saucy, but he stopped her lips with a kiss. Somebody called ‘Gerrard,’ ‘Gerrard,’ and he whispered,

“To-morrow, Cary.”

Tomorrow came, and Gerrard Benny spoke to his father on the subject of setting him up in business.

“Must be content to work as a journeyman, Gerrard. I have no money,” said

the farmer. "Times are hard. The last crops have not told."

Gerrard was disappointed, he tried to reason with his father, and the good man was obliged to confess that he had lost a sum of money in some speculation which he could never hope to replace.

Gerrard repaired to farmer Liddon to tell him honestly how matters stood, to ask him if he would give him Cary for a wife although but a journeyman blacksmith, or if not, to permit their engagement to continue until better prospects should arise.

But the farmer was enraged at what he heard, and said Cary must break with him entirely.

It had always been understood by him, in fact, that farmer Benny had the means and the intention of setting his son up in business, and now, seeing there was no chance of it, he considered that a deception

had been practised on him. and would listen to no explanations.

Very sad were poor Gerrard and Cary.

She however would not hear of giving her lover up. She said, and truly she felt it, such a step would break his heart and hers.

She would not think of marrying him without her parents' consent—only just to let them go on as they were now—dear companions and friends.

But her parents were inflexible. The mother had already another match in her eye for her, and unmoved by the girl's expostulations and tears, fearful of her disobedience, locked her up.

Gerrard took it bitterly to heart. He could not bear to look forward to a series of years deprived of the hope of her being his wife.

March came in cold and severe, but the hardy primrose peeped forth in the hedges

—for the first time during ten years there was no Cary to gather them with him. Useless was his search for her in every well-known path—she was nowhere to be seen.

In vain he stood beneath what used to be her window, night after night, in hopes to have a word, or catch a glimpse. She was no longer there. Her room had been changed to one looking upon the inner yard.

Thus passed away some weeks.

All at once Gerrard's health declined—his appetite was gone—his face became haggard, his pulse quick.

At first he resisted his parents' wishes to send for a medical man, and strove to baffle the disease, but it was too deep-seated—he was obliged to comply, and the doctor pronounced him to be in a rapid decline.

Meantime a young friend of Cary's,

known to him likewise, tried to bring about some communication with his mistress, but in vain—she was watched too closely.

Her father, irritated with old Benny, who, he said, had always promised him to set up the son in business when he was out of his time, saw that stringent measures alone could break the tie that bound the lovers, and was determined to use them.

Thirza, the kind friend, at last found means to inform Cary of Gerrard's ill health, and this did but aggravate the sorrows of the poor girl without being of the least service to either party.

Gerrard was now on his dying bed. His earnest wish and prayer was to see Cary and bid her farewell, but this her parents positively prohibited.

This spring—notwithstanding a week or ten days mild weather in February—

proved a rigorous one, with snow and storm, and everything was proportionably backward. It was like a relapse into winter. All nature seemed to wear a garb of sadness.

Now, however, the air had become soft, the sun threw its slanting beams across poor Gerrard's bed, the buds begun to shew themselves upon the trees visible from his window—he knew the time of the apple blossom was come, and he besought Thirza to procure him a bough from Cary's apple-tree.

It was not easy to get at, for Thirza was prohibited the house; but she managed late in the evening to enter the garden and break off a branch with three beautiful sprays of blossom on it from this tree, so often witness of the vows of the lovers.

Gerrard received it with transport, and pressed it over and over again to his lips. He had it placed in water on a little table

near his bed, and kept his languid eyes continually fixed upon it. Just before he died he said to his mother

“Put them in the coffin on my breast,” and he pointed to the apple blossoms.

His request was religiously complied with. When he was laid out, the apple blossoms, fresh and fragrant, were laid on his breast, and mouldered with him in his coffin.

Many tears followed him to the grave, for he was much beloved in the neighbourhood.

Before the autumn closed Cary died also. From the moment she heard of Gerrard's death, she gradually pined away, and the last wish she expressed being to rest beside him, they were united in death.

Here Fanny paused—she could scarcely conceal her tears, for she had known both parties.

“Thank you Fanny,” said Mr. Parry, it is a melancholy story—I do not wonder that it made an impression when it occurred.”

“It is very sad—so sad !” said Emily, “It is like the ballad of Edwin and Emma which Mallet tells us was founded on fact, only that Cary’s parents were even harder hearted than those he speaks of—for in the ballad a last interview is permitted to the dying lover—

‘She came ; his cold hand softly touch’d,
And bath’d with many a tear ;
Fast falling o’er the primrose pale.
So morning dews appear.’”

“What became of Cary’s parents ?—they must have felt her death very deeply,” inquired Mrs. Stanley.

“I believe they did, for they left the country—I do not know what became of them,” returned Fanny, “Old Benny was

obliged to give up his farm, as he got into difficulties—he never raised his head after his son died.”

“And who planted the apple tree at the grave?” inquired Emily.

“It was Gerrard’s mother—she got a scion from poor Cary’s tree, and had it grafted on a stock—ever since it has been watched by the young people of the hamlet, and the grave duly weeded.”

“It ought to be called Gerrard’s and Cary’s grave,” observed Mrs. Stanley.

“True,” replied Fanny, “but it has always been known as Cary’s grave—probably because she was the latest buried there.”

CHAPTER XVI.

“ Think upon the time
When the clear depths of thy yet lucid soul
Were ruffled with the troublings of strange joy.”

TALFOURD.

ON their return homeward they met Vaughan. He joined them as they emerged from the valley.

Emily was sorry to see him looking so depressed, and with her usual anxiety to draw him from himself, began to relate to him the story of Gerrard and Cary. He was much interested in it, and, when

Emily ceased speaking, addressed some remarks to Mr. Parry.

“There is often great depth of feeling,” he observed, “in the unsophisticated portion of society and we do wrong in supposing that refinement of mind is confined to any particular rank of life.

“I never walk through a village churchyard without thinking of the stanza—as true in reality, as it is beautiful in poetry—

‘Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid,
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway’d,
Or wak’d to extacy the living lyre.’

“The germ of poetic feeling in a susceptible heart, and an imagination, that if cultivated might have made a Shakspeare, or a Spencer, may have lain dormant in the bosom of this young blacksmith. Nicoll too was a farmer’s son—herded kine

and turned up the soil—yet how beautiful are those lines addressed to his mistress! just such as Gerrard's heart might have dictated—

‘I dream’d I had a diamond mine,
Ayont yon billowy sea,
An’ a’thing rich and a’thing rare
Was brought to pleasure me.

Earth’s fairest things were at my gate,
An’ standing in my ha’;
But forth I came in that proud hour
An’ chose thee ’mang them a’.’”

“Those are pretty lines,” said Mr. Parry, “but I have never met with Nicoll’s poems.”

“I have read several of them,” observed Emily, “but I do not remember that one.”

Then she added, after a short pause, looking up into Mr. Parry’s face, inquiringly—

“It seems by this village tale that people may die of love. In our ballad poetry we have frequent instances of it, but in the world, in reality, do you think so?”

“Certainly it has happened,” Mr. Parry replied gravely, “though most likely not very often, and perhaps may happen still—but the world is changing much, and has lost most of its romance; for as luxury increases, and artificial wants spring up, wealth becomes a magnet beneath whose attraction love vanishes. Any passion that preys on the mind may destroy life, and disappointment weighs heavier on some hearts than on others. That there have been instances of people dying under the influence of thwarted affection, cannot be doubted—the frequency of it is the question. Such a history as that of Cary and Gerrard is more likely to occur among the peasantry than in the higher ranks of life.

"I agree entirely with you, Vaughan," he continued, turning towards Vaughan, "that the finest feelings and most generous emotions often lie buried in obscurity, and that genius exists where we least think of looking for it. We have, however, numerous examples of talent struggling into open day, and some of our sweetest poets—like the one you have just mentioned, Nicoll—have poured forth their lays while engaged in humble callings."

Emily was glad to hear Mr. Parry speak at such length, for he had not opened his lips from the time they left the farmhouse until they met Vaughan.

His thoughts had been occupied with Mrs. Stanley. Many points in the story had brought tears into her eyes during the recital, and made her look like the Caroline Apreece of vanished hours—at least Mr. Parry thought so, and he nearly divined what was passing in her mind. Her

reflections were bitter, turned as they were upon her own girlish days, and the happiness it would have been for her and Stanley—like the village lovers—to have rested in an early grave—she could not help envying them—there was no mutability in their love.

“Wherever there is a poetical turn,” resumed Vaughan, pursuing the thread of his reflections, “a country life is more likely to develop it than any other. What is poetry but the exquisite harmony of nature striking on the imagination, and giving a voice to passion and feeling? It was this impulse that taught Gerrard to see the charms of his beloved reflected in the most beautiful objects around him—the opening blossoms—and made him wish to bear her emblems with him to the grave. As the rays of the sun brought forth musical sounds from the statue of Memnon

‘So the glad impulse of congenial powers
Or of sweet sound, or fair proportion’d form,

The grace of motion, or the bloom of light,
Thrills through Imagination's tender frame,
From nerve to nerve ; all naked and alive
They catch the spreading rays: till now the soul
At length discloses every tuneful spring
To that harmonious movement from without
Responsive.'

“And though in this age, when all scribblers of verses consider themselves poets, and the same imagery, wearying from its repetition, is presented in every page, until publishers, who told forth their gold liberally to a Byron, a Scott, or a Moore, are obliged to return the manuscripts unread, and we, caterers for the public taste, can only save ourselves from being inundated by setting forth ‘no poetry paid for,’ still gems do appear occasionally, bright as diamonds among meaner stones. Poetry however is not likely to make a man's fortune in these days, or a woman's neither,” he added, casting a glance and smile at Emily, who colored a little, “and

I advise all my correspondents and friends to endeavour at good prose."

"I generally make it a rule to skip poetry in all the periodicals," said Mr. Parry—I cannot say I am very fond of it now, except Shakspeare and Spenser, and for the prose papers in your magazines—give me an essay of Addison's or a paper of Steele's.

"I do not dispute your taste," said Vaughan, "but I fear the style would be considered too plain and unadorned now—I doubt even if Addison's essays would please—the public taste is formed on other models in our days."

"And yet what writer amongst you all can equal the exquisite prose of Mackenzie," exclaimed Mr. Parry.

"Ah! yes, Mackenzie—here is Emily will quite agree with you. Mackenzie is her model, is he not Emily?"

"Yes, I think his style is exquisite, as

Mr. Parry says, I read his papers in the Mirror over and over ;” replied Emily, “but you were talking of Magazine poetry Mr. Parry, several of our minor poets and poetesses made their first appearance in the periodicals—they were their nursery-beds, and some of them have had in after days a fair share of success. Hubert is angry, they send him such indifferent poetry, and he will not write any himself though he could.”

“Right, right,” said Mr. Parry, “no man should write poetry who did not feel he was born to be a star.”

“Then you would limit the number to very few,” said Emily, laughing.

CHAPTER XVII.

‘ Incessant gall
Corroding every thought.’

THOMSON.

THE winter and spring passed away. summer arrived, and brought with it the family of Lord Kidwelly to Bonham Park. They did not come alone. A large party of fashionables accompanied them, and amongst others Mr. Delville.

Vaughan saw him arrive with secret agony; the more so because his own meeting with Matilda was not satisfactory

to him. Absence had increased his passion—what effect had it on her? he could not answer this question to himself. A thousand fears unnerved him. His spirits were low. His exertions in the literary line had not succeeded as he expected. Love had not lent him that inspiration which it does to some men. It had rendered his mind wandering and unsettled—no concentration of power—no lofty flights of fancy.

He did not know the secret of his failure. Love enobles the mind of man, and gives energy to his exertions, but the object must be a worthy one—the heart must rest in faith and security on the truth and goodness of its adored. Matilda, frivolous and uncertain, could not inspire such love.

Meantime Emily, struggling to look with complacency upon the passion of Vaughan for Matilda, endeavouring to be

everything to him that a friend and sister could be, and having never in her young dreams expected to be more, was becoming an exquisitely beautiful woman, all intellect and soul—a countenance that changed from grave to gay according to the passing thought, like as shadow and sunshine alternate in a fair landscape—a form now arrived at perfect womanhood, which Canova might have taken as a model for his Venus.

The friendship which had sprung up between her and Mrs. Stanley, had been of the greatest advantage to her.

Mrs. Stanley, whose sweet and equable air gave no intimation of the sorrows through which she had passed, attested only by grey hair, which grief, not time, had changed from its once lovely brown, and by the deep furrows that crossed her brow, assisted in giving a polish to Emily's manners, which perhaps they wanted

before. Not that there was anything *brusque* or abrupt about Emily—nothing but the bashfulness incident on the secluded life she led, and this gradually disappeared, beneath the kind efforts of Mrs. Stanley, who did everything she could to bring her forward.

She soon found that Emily's touch on the piano was light, her voice sweet, and her ear good, and as she herself was a proficient in music, she made her sing with her every afternoon.

Communion with a mind purified by adversity, ennobled by religion—one that has seen much of life, with its happiness and its bitter disappointments, must always be of use to the young.

The Vaughans saw this, and both, equally attracted by the interesting Mrs. Stanley, encouraged Emily's predilection and did all they could to draw her new friend to their house.

The meetings between Matilda and Vaughan became less frequent. She no longer made opportunities to see him. Invited to Bonham Park with the other guests, he beheld her lend a willing ear to the whispered conversations of Mr. Delville, and when their eyes happened to meet, her's no longer conveyed the assurance of hope, which they formerly did.

Dancing was now, generally the amusement of the evening. Vaughan had never been fond of dancing. He looked upon it as a frivolous pastime after a man was five and twenty, nevertheless he liked to see others enjoy it, and admired it as the poetry of motion.' But when Matilda spun round in the Waltz, and whirled in the Polka with Mr. Delville, the throbbing of his heart was painful—he could have dashed the grinning coxcomb, as he called him, to the ground, and he writhed beneath the smile and bewitching helpless-

ness with which Matilda leaned on him for support.

Then he turned his eyes with approbation on Emily, who, graceful and composed, yet with all the vivacity of youth in her countenance, eschewed those favorite dances, although her step was as light, and her enjoyment in the dance as great as that of Matilda.

“I should not like my pupil to rush about thus with every man who asked her, and I am glad Emily has no taste for such violent exhibitions,” he mentally exclaimed, “a slow waltz as I have seen it danced in Spain is a graceful movement, but this ——” and he looked with contempt as Mr. Delville, who was in truth a clumsy performer, whirled his partner so violently, that at last he brought her on the carpet after running his foot through her gossamer dress.

The Misses Tourteville blessed their

stars such was not the fashion in their day —*they* remembered when Lord Allumel led one of them through a minuet, and what applause was bestowed on the performance. Miss Elmour, who had mixed later in the world, when minuets were on the decline, thought of a quadrille—one of the first of the quadrilles—danced by eight beautiful girls in costume, among whom she herself was the most conspicuous, while Mr. Nat Walton who had been lauding ‘Sir Roger de Coverly,’ as a capital Christmas dance in the ear of Lizzy Roberts, composed a couplet on the instant about

“An arrant donkey without brains,
Getting a tumble for his pains,”

which set the young lady off in so violent a fit of laughing as made Mr. Delville give her a look when he rose, that if look could do it, would have annihilated her,

and brought on her besides a very severe reproof on the following day from her father.

“Mr. Nat Walton, you must not make me laugh when we are in company, indeed you must not, you must keep all your drolleries for our tea-table;” Lizzy said to him the next evening he came into tea, as, standing at the table with his usual endeavour to make himself useful, he began to cut bread and butter for the whole party.

“I cannot help it, Miss Lizzy,” he returned, “when anything droll tickles my fancy, I must out with it. Certainly that coxcomb Delville looked as if he would have eaten us all up—but what a clumsy dancer he is!—however unless an Englishman has practised a great deal abroad, he scarcely ever knows how to waltz. I do not dislike good waltzing—smooth and not too quick—and the Spanish country

dances that were in vogue in my young days were very pretty; but the polka is the most un-English dance—if I may call it so—that has ever been introduced into this country—Ha! ha! ha!—I never see it that I do not think of what your old nurse said when she heard you were going to a dance at Bonham Park, Miss Lizzy—I mean the first evening you spent there.”

“Now don’t Mr. Nat Walton” said one young lady glancing her eye at papa who was reading the newspaper.

“Now pray don’t” says another.

“Yes, I must” retorted he “It is too good—there’s Miss Lizzy in fits already—she came to me with a most imploring look to beg I would not let her dear child—that’s you Miss Lizzy—you in particular——”

“Oh we know it all” interrupted Lizzy
“nurse told us.”

But Mr. Nat Walton would not be interrupted.

“—Not to let her dear child” he resumed “dance the hugging dance she heard they danced so much at Bonham Park—Ha ! ha! Miss Lizzy—was not that it ?”

CHAPTER XVIII.

“Love stood the siege, and would not yield his breast.”

DRYDEN.

It was very true what Vaughan had said to Emily more than a year ago relative to the assistance she gave him. People would have been indeed surprised had they known what a number of the articles she had a hand in which appeared in the popular periodical he edited.

Many of the authors whose works were submitted to him to review, would have been mortified to the quick had they sus-

pected that it was a young lady who wrote the critical notices of them. A taste formed on the most classic writers of the Augustan æra of English literature enabled Emily to seize on the peculiar faults of style—the too great laconism of some, the verbosity of other novel writers—and with steady but gentle criticism to point out the prevailing defect.

Alive to everything that was beautiful in nature or art, she caught equally at the beauties as the faults, and her judicious praise incited many an inexperienced pen to further efforts.

On the whole the critical part of the periodical met with much success; the imaginative portion of literature being turned over to Emily, while Vaughan reviewed the scientific and historical works himself.

Of late however, since Vaughan's health and spirits had begun to decline, Emily's

labours became more incessant as she often had to decide upon the claims of articles sent for insertion, and nicely balance the merits and defects of each. It was very seldom that her choice did not please Vaughan.

Sometimes indeed his irritability of temper rendered him difficult to satisfy on this and other heads, and a gesture of impatience or hasty word would bring a tear to Emily's eye. But he always blamed himself for it the next instant, and was only the more prodigal of thanks and praise.

These tempers, which Emily saw were caused by the unhappiness of his mind, filled her with the deepest pity, and made her the more anxious to soften his disappointments. She felt as if she could have strangled Matilda for sporting with his feelings and destroying his peace.

Yet she often wondered that so fine a mind as his could be the slave of so heart-

less a coquette, for such she believed Matilda to be.

“But it is impossible,” she would say to herself, “it cannot be that Hubert will always suffer thus—his eyes must be opened at last—he must see Matilda in her true colors, for false and faithless she is. I am sure she will accept Mr. Delville. A very short time must decide all, and tear the veil from Hubert’s eyes. Separation from a beloved object, from one who loves in return, might wither up a proud and strong heart, whose happiness was set on the die, or might perhaps break a sensitive and imaginative one. ‘People may die of love and disappointment,’ Mr. Parry said so when he heard the story of Cary and Gerrard—but to break one’s heart for a broken faith, no, I am sure Hubert will not. I should hate and despise a man that slighted me as Matilda is slighting and deceiving Hubert—I should never give him a second thought—no, never.”

Perhaps not, you hardly know yourself yet, Emily. But will the scholar, the man of genius, who has lived in day-dreams from his youth up—he, of whose mind Imagination is the master-spring, Fiction the companion—Fiction,

‘ Upon her vagrant wings,
Wafting ten thousand colors through the air,
Which, by the glances of her magic eye,
She blends and shifts at will, through countless forms,
Her wild creation.—’

will he be guided by reason?

Emily! you cannot tell.

Emily contrived, notwithstanding the assiduity with which she assisted Vaughan, to have some hours in each day to herself, and part of these she generally spent with Mrs. Stanley. In the evening she was now frequently out. As she was much the prettiest and most attractive girl in the village, and moved with a natural grace,

the Misses Bonham could not make up their little dances without her, although they were never able to prevail on her to waltz or polka. Perhaps the secret of this refusal might be in part, that Vaughan did not like those dances—certain it is she was firm in her denial.

Lord Kidwelly always invited the Vaughans. He considered them poor as they were—the most aristocratic people by descent of his immediate neighbours—besides he liked to have a clever man at his table. Vaughan, without intending it, raised the tone of conversation whenever he appeared. He was beginning to be known in the literary world, and people intuitively fell into that sort of discourse which they thought most suited him. Even men who have no literary taste themselves esteem it in others, and do not like to seem deficient.

Vaughan's manner too was very capti-

vating. He never obtruded his pursuits or opinions ; but when he was drawn into the subject, he was both eloquent and enthusiastic—full of information and anecdote. If he was sometimes, from hidden causes, silent, abstracted—perhaps moody ; —this variableness only made him the more talked of,—‘ It was the eccentricity of genius,’ they said.

Lord Kidwelly soon found it was always a question among his invited guests. “ Will Vaughan be there ? ” and he was the more anxious to secure him.

Vaughan smarting under Matilda’s behaviour, often determined not to go ; but, lured by the spell she threw over him, he never had the courage to refuse.

Miss Penelope, always feeling out of place and constrained there, would have preferred remaining at home ; and Emily would willingly have staid with her ; for, notwithstanding the politeness of the

Misses Bonham to her, she could not endure either of them. But this Vaughan would not hear of—he chose both his sister and Emily to accompany him to a house where he now always experienced more pain than pleasure. But as hope whispered to him every day, “Matilda will explain everything when she has the opportunity—her apparent coldness, and why, though near each other, you are in reality so severed,”—still he went, and still he returned home but the more dissatisfied and unhappy.

CHAPTER XIX.

“ These therefore are his own peculiar charge ;
No meaner hand may discipline the shoots,
None but his steel approach them.”

COWPER.

MR. CARRADOCK has finished pruning the raspberry bushes in the narrow strip of garden running down to the river behind the cottage of the Misses Tourteville and is now sitting at their neat breakfast-table with the two old ladies.

The eldest had spied him from her window engaged at what he called his ‘pas-

time' and had sent Molly to beg the pleasure of his company to breakfast.

"Impossible! impossible!" said the old gentleman looking at the shabby coat he had on,—set aside particularly for gardening purposes "I cannot—I have just finished and am going home to breakfast.

"My mistress will be quite disappointed, sir," said Molly. She has ordered me to toast some bacon and boil some more eggs.

"Well, well" returned he impatiently "if I must breakfast with your mistress this coat wont do—I must change it. There! the raspberries are all finished," and he gave the last touch with his pruning knife "they will bear twice as much fruit this year as last—I shall be back in five minutes—that plum-tree wants a little handling, I see—I must leave it for another morning."

By the time Miss Tourteville had the

tea ready and just as Molly was going to bring in the eggs, Mr. Carradock made his appearance. His hands bore no marks of his pleasant morning work—his best coat was on, and his bald head shone bright and clean.

The Misses Tourteville, erect as statues, in their dark calico gowns and close mob caps, received him with the air and courtesy of two princesses.

After thanks for the trouble he had taken, and admiration of his early rising—he was in the garden at cock-crow—the conversation fell into another channel.

“You were not at Lord Kidwelly’s the other evening, Mr. Carradock,” said the eldest.

“No, madam, I never go to those places—I had much rather pick the snails off my cabbages in the moonlight—indeed moonlight or no moonlight, for when it is dark I take out my lantern.

I hardly know how we have got into this dissipation ourselves," said Miss Dorothy Tourteville, drawing up her head, "I never thought we should mix in such gaieties again, especially in this quiet village. Molly is quite frightened at our late hours. But Lord Kidwelly was so pressing we could not refuse. Our crest and arms—no doubt he saw them on my little dog's collar; I worked them myself—may have given him a hint how highly we are connected, and of course he would wish to have the best society the place affords."

"What do you think, sister?"

"I agree with you entirely, Dorothy—I dare say Lord Kidwelly found out that our ancestor's name is in the roll at Battle Abbey."

"You had the same people as usual, last evening," said Mr. Carradock, suppressing a smile at the innocent foible of

the old ladies, "had you not, Madam?"

"Yes, much the same, I think, and Miss Diana and Matilda played off their usual airs—Emily Hume was there, she is quite come out, and a very pretty girl she is—perhaps rather too diffident."

"So much the better," returned Mr. Carradock, "I do not like girls the least forward—what a capital new egg this is! just from the hen—I never could eat an egg that was hung."

"I am glad you have chanced to get it," said the eldest lady looking benignantly, "Molly generally chooses the eggs well."

"Emily was a sweet child," resumed Mr. Carradock. "When she went to Miss Winny Toms's school I used to see her every morning passing my window with her satchel of books in her hand, and sometimes I called her in when she was returning home to give her flower-roots for her own little garden. We are great

friends, she has always a smile for me when we meet."

"What a lucky thing for her that the Vaughans took such a fancy to her—good Mrs. Benson, worthy as she is, could never have brought her up like a lady."

"I remember when her mother was married," said Miss Tourteville, the blind old lady, her grandmother, was very glad to have her settled, but I think she pined away after she left her, she did not survive long."

"I heard there was a brother—I mean a brother of Emily's mother—that went away when he was young, and was never heard of, I think it is one of the old barber's stories, I believe he has given me the history of every one in the village," observed Mr. Carradock.

"I remember the circumstance being spoken of," returned Miss Dorothy, "but it occurred before we came to reside here."

“What was Mrs. Hume’s name before she was married,” asked Mr. Carradock.”

“Pierpoint I think, was it not Dorothea?”

“No, not Pierpoint, certainly,” said Dorothea; “I cannot tell.”

“And was nothing ever known of the young man after he left the village?”

“We were told that no news of him ever reached his relatives; they had no means of tracing him. No doubt he must be dead long ago, or they would have heard something about him.”

“I don’t know, you see his grandmother is gone and his sister too, but, however, it is most probable that he is dead. Then Emily, I suppose, has no relative living.”

“None that she knows of, I believe,” said Miss Tourteville.

“Poor thing,” exclaimed Mr. Carradock.

“The Vaughans are very fond of her,

and have educated her well," observed Miss Dorothy.

"True, true, but they are not rich themselves. It is unlikely they can make any provision for her."

"They are not rich, certainly," said Miss Tourteville, "but Vaughan is an author, and some of these authors make a great deal."

"Yes, some few, but others I suspect make very little. Devote yourself to *Pelargoniums* if you want to get rich in those days, or look out for some new little *Tom Thumb*. However, Emily is very handsome, and I hope she will marry well."

"I hope so too," said Miss Tourteville "and I am glad to see she has too much good sense to be spoiled by the society of the Miss Bonhams."

"We find them civil in their way, particularly Matilda, the youngest," observed

Miss Dorothy, "but the manners of the present race of young ladies are very different from what they were in our day—are they not, sister?"

"Very different indeed," returned Miss Tourteville, "in my young days the gentleman only just touched the tips of a lady's hand as he led her down to dinner, such respect! now a young lady thinks nothing of taking the arm of a man she never saw before. Ah! I recollect when I trod the halls of St. James's with —— but no matter, what does it now signify."

"True, very true, my dear lady," said Mr. Carradock, "I cannot say I remember such courtly fashions, but I have heard of them. Fashions pass away. People change with them—there is change in every one. I have not a wish beyond my garden now, but it was not always so," and his brow for an instant lost its calmness—it was only for an instant however, and he resumed.

“Well, I think your garden is all put to rights,” he said, rising, “the raspberries will bear remarkably well this year you will find. There is nothing to do now but the plum-tree. I will step in some day soon, and nail it up. A few branches cut, and some of the moss scraped off, it may do, but it looks sickly.”

“Suppose,” said Miss Dorothy, and the withered face had a sweet expression in it as she spoke—“suppose you take an early tea with us, after you have finished the plum-tree, and play a penny rubber.”

“No, no, no,” returned the old gentleman, “I never touch a card now, never, never,” he continued to murmur as he hastily left the room.

“I am sorry you said anything to him about the cards,” observed Miss Tourteville, “you know he flies the sight of them.”

“I am sorry I did, sister, I forgot his

hatred of them. I do not care for them, or you either, except to help a friend to pass away an hour. And he might have potted my geraniums instead. Well I am very forgetful, I am afraid I am getting old."

CHAPTER XX.

“Of rank and riches proud, Cleora frowns;
For are not coronets akin to crowns?”

YOUNG.

RUMOURS of the approaching marriage of Matilda with Mr. Delville, fell on Vaughan's ear. He tried to look them steadily in the face, and fancy they were false.

There was Matilda still before him, fascinating and beautiful as ever; no cloud was on her brow, no shadow on her visage. No—she could not look thus if she were deceiving him. She could not appear

so unruffled in church, at her father's table, when he saw her in her walks, were it true. There was no change in her manner towards Mr. Delville either. It was as it used to be, always coquettish.

Vaughan had scarcely had a word with her of late however, and not one without witnesses.

“Surrounded as she is by so many guests it is impossible she can find out a moment to spare for me,” he would say to himself, and yet his heart contradicted his words—he felt that she might have found a moment.

Matilda in the mean time had made up her mind to break with him, but she wished to do it quietly. She did not wish for a scene. She shrank from what might be his reproaches. He had her letters it is true, but she was assured he would never make use of them. Her deceit might break his heart, but he would never shew it.

She had been brought to this determination equally by Diana's councils and her own free will.

Thus they spake as they sat together in the boudoir one morning.

"Matilda, what mean those tears?" exclaimed Diana, seeing Matilda lay down the novel she was reading, and cover her face with her hand, "you cannot be so mad as to hesitate about accepting Mr. Delville. Think of his fortune—his position, heir to the title of Viscount. No, you surely cannot be so mad."

Matilda continued to weep, but she did not reply.

"You have confessed to me your engagement with Vaughan, and you fancy you love him, but, believe me, Matilda, there is no reality in your sentiments—you know our father would be enraged at such a match, and if you should marry him in spite of parental authority, what

would be the consequence? a narrow income, and to live in that old Hall with Miss Penelope. Gracious me, Matilda, I think I see you there, sitting in Vaughan's study, copying manuscripts for him, or, perhaps picking the French beans in the garden, or helping to shell the peas. No balls, no concerts, or operas ! Oh, Matilda, could you lead such a life?"

"No, I could not," said Matilda, nervously, "it would kill me. I have given him up in my mind, quite given him up, yet I cannot but weep."

"It was a folly, a childish folly, Matilda, unworthy of a strong mind—and I know Matilda has a strong one—put in comparison with this love, which can but last a little time, even if it is not as I take it, the romance of a brain filled with sentimental reading—put in competition with it, I say, an immense fortune, a dashing equipage, such jewels, Matilda, the family

diamonds are a constellation in themselves—how beautiful you will look in them! and then a trip to Paris every year if you like—what is love—the nonsense of fictitious tales, to this reality? Perhaps in the good old times of the Paxtons it might have been different. Then people, obliged to live in the country, looked after their own housekeeping, heard the children their prayers, made the pickles and preserves, and worked hangings and toilet covers to be handed down from generation to generation. Then love might have been of use to help to make the time run smoothly; but now, in this more enlightened age, when to fly about the world is woman's chief delight—to shine, her study—when our philosophers—for we have philosophers among us now, Matilda—declare that woman is in a great many points superior to man; when poverty is looked upon with contempt, and the acme of hu-

man happiness consists in wealth and the superiority which springs from it—no Matilda, you never in those enlightened days could be such a fool as to refuse your hand to Mr. Delville.”

“Diana I will not refuse him—I have made up my mind. Every one knows what will best conduce to their own happiness—I could not be happy without wealth and rank. Love is a dream, a folly, I allow, still, it was a sweet dream while it lasted. But it is passed, sister.”

“My darling Viscountess, that is to be,” said Diana, kissing her, “I counted on your good sense, and I have not been disappointed. What fêtes we shall have at Delville Castle when you come in to your title! and that must be soon as Delville’s uncle, the present viscount, is in his ninetieth year. How he will make the country ring with our exquisite taste in pictures and statuary, and what bijoux

we will bring from Paris and Rome to adorn our suites of rooms! I shall certainly pay you a long visit, my dear, but don't expect to keep me with you—I am determined to make a brilliant match myself."

"I hope so," said Matilda with a sigh."

"Now do not look so lugubrious—you know you are to give papa your reply in an hour. Ninnyhammer as Mr. Delville is, he did not display want of sense in going to head quarters. How I should like to have heard his pompous, long speech! you laugh at the idea. Well! I like to see you laugh. However, it is just what I have been wishing for, and you too have wished it, though you will not own it—confess now that you have been hoping it."

"I hardly know," said Matilda, "but I suppose it is best for me. I should die if condemned to live in obscurity."

Matilda incited by her sister, who, while she flattered her for having a strong mind, worked upon her weakness, and well seconded by her own passion for wealth and rank, soon brought herself to look upon her love for Vaughan as a folly, and to build upon marriage with a man she thoroughly despised, for her best happiness in life. If she was to repent being married, she thought it would be much better to repent it 'in a coach and six,' than in poverty.

She wondered at herself, it is true, for being able to give up Vaughan so easily.

But it had only been her imagination that was engaged.

"Where nought but shadowy forms were seen to move,
As Idleness, fancied in her dreaming mood——"

Her fancied romantic attachment, offspring of ennui and selfishness, had no foundation in the heart, and no regret for the torture

she was about to inflict upon the man, who would never have thought seriously of her had she not done all in her power to attract him, troubled the visions that floated around her pillow that night of future rank, added to the enjoyments that wealth would place within her reach.

Every person who made one at the reunions going on at Lord Kidwelly's—and those were all the principal inhabitants of the village, for even the Misses Tourteville and Miss Elmour, somehow drawn into the magic circle, forgot their wonted seclusion and early hours, perceived that a serious affair was in progress between Matilda Bonham and Mr. Delville.

Vaughan alone, wilfully blinded, although he suffered torture at what he considered her coquetry, could not believe that she seriously intended to break with him.

Emily was the only one of all his friends

who thoroughly read his heart, and understood the nature of the gloom which hung over him. She pitied him from the depths of her innocent bosom, and found no pleasure in the thought that he and Matilda would soon be effectually separated. With too humble an opinion of herself to think that she could ever be more to him than a sister, and indeed not reading her own heart aright, she inwardly determined to dedicate her life entirely to him, and try what friendship could do in assuaging the wounds inflicted by love.

She felt that as a sister she was next in his affections to Penelope, and, owing so much to both, imagined that she could never be sufficiently grateful. She too, built her airy castles, as young girls will do.

“——Shaping fantasies, that apprehend
More than cool reason ever comprehends.”

The most frequent and fairest of them

was the image of all three in the decline of life, for, somehow or other, she imagined grey hairs on her own head far before the usual time—she devotes herself to both (she would not own to herself more so to Vaughan than to Penelope) reading, writing for them, watching over them, being a second self to each.

A very, very old lady was Miss Penelope in these visions. Not active and bustling as now, but softened down by years, placid and gentle. And Vaughan, an old bachelor, likewise felt the weight of years. He was obliged to walk with a stick and often used her arm (Emily's) as a support. He was quite as handsome in age however, as he was in youth, with a noble forehead, high and bald, and grised hair that was very becoming. Then he had the same sweet smile as now, but more frequent, and his dark eyes looked into her's very fondly.

It was a pretty castle, and she liked to build it; yet sometimes the thought came and it always brought a sigh with it, that Vaughan might some time or other find some one he might love as passionately as he did Matilda, and make her his wife; and then the castle fell to the ground, for she could not bring a fourth person into it. Then again this thought vanished when she studied his countenance, and trembled at the idea of the torture Matilda was about to inflict upon him.

No he would never love another.

CHAPTER XXI.

“For now I see,
Inconstancy,
More in women than in men remain.”

SHAKSPEARE.

THE news of Matilda Bonham's marriage with Mr. Delville fell upon Vaughan like a thunderbolt.

Emily thought he must have been in some degree prepared for it, but he was not so in the least.

He had flattered himself, in spite of his jealous doubts, that she would explain appearances away, and that although she

had not an opportunity now, she would do so by letter immediately after her departure.

He thought it likely that her father or sister might have suspected his passion for her, and that when she seemed most taken up with Mr. Delville, she was but endeavouring to mislead them with respect to her own feelings.

He had led her into the error of a secret engagement, and was he to blame her for trying to ward off suspicions? Indeed a sentence she had let fall to him the last day he saw her, which was at a dinner party at Bonham Park, bore such meaning, and had helped to calm the distress her departure, without any other communication had given him. He had endeavoured to elicit more at the time, but was baffled whenever he caught an opportunity to converse with her. Some one always came in the way, or somebody else spoke before

he could articulate what he wished. He wanted particularly to ask her a question or two, and find out what her address would be, as he understood they were not going immediately to London. But he had failed in every point. Still her smile was as sweet as ever, when their eyes met. It seemed as if it bid him doubt no more.

Something he had said to Diana of their plans and place of destination, but she had answered him evasively.

She did not exactly know papa's plans; he had not quite made up his mind, she said. He talked one day of a tour to the Lakes of Cumberland—another of a trip to the Highlands, where he wanted to have some shooting, and after all she was not sure that they would not winter in Italy.

Her reply confirmed him in the idea that Matilda feared her father and sister. Diana evidently did not choose to tell him

where they were going, and this supposition formed a strong excuse for all that had pained him.

“Matilda will assuredly write to me,” he would say to himself—“why should she not? are we not engaged as before?—yes, she will write without doubt.”

And thus he said so often to himself, that it became a certainty, and made him every morning anxiously look for the letter; but day after day passed away and no letter came.

“She is prevented,” he thought, as he moodily turned away from the letters that arrived, heart-sick, for her hand was not there. “Diana watches her—to-morrow, perhaps.”

But the letter came not.

It was in the newspapers Vaughan saw the announcement of Matilda’s marriage.

Rage and grief took possession of his mind. How could she deceive him thus!

Some strong influence must have been exercised over her—a father's commands—a sister's persuasions. Diana, so cold hearted and worldly, must have used the ascendancy she possessed over her sister to make her wretched—for were not Matilda's affections his? Had she not told him so over and over? Had she not always ridiculed Mr. Delville? No, she could have no preference for the man she was united to; she must be miserable.

Then a burst of rage at her falseness—then pity for her fate and his own. Thus did his feelings alternate all that day as he wandered through the distant valleys, and over the hills, at a pace which strong excitement could alone have enabled him to keep up.

At night, shut up in his own room, he unlocked his desk and took out some of her letters, those letters which had so often filled him, at one moment with

exquisite pleasure, at another with painful doubts.

The first one he chanced to open was written in reply to some reproaches, some allusions he had made to her flirtations with Mr. Delville.

She repulsed his suspicions in it as unworthy of him and of her—laughed at the silly coxcomb, as she called Mr. Delville—recalled to him their plighted engagement, and assured him of her truth—said she knew she was a trifler, owned her fondness for gaiety and amusement, but bade him remember that no attractions of the world should make her forget that she was one day to be his wife.

“My wife,” exclaimed Vaughan aloud, in a tone of anguish, as he dashed the letter on the table, “Matilda, with all your faults, your coquetry, your untutored fancies, I thought you were sincere, I thought that once mine—feminine and pliable as

you seemed, I could have moulded your character at will. I would not have had you different from what you were. I loved even your faults—no mother to watch over your childhood—no guide but that incarnation of stateliness and ice, your philosophical governess ; and your haughty sister for a companion. The wonder was that you were so amiable. I thought I should have led you—instructed you—rooted out all errors from your composition—made you a perfect woman in mind as you were in form—vain, vain dream.”

And as the dreamer spoke he covered his face with his hands.

Vaughan was in his study at the usual time on the morrow. When Emily entered to resume her daily occupations, she beheld him sitting with his elbow on the desk, and his hand shading his eyes.

The opening and shutting of the door made no impression on him. He did not

see her come into the room, and Emily did not like to speak. The morning salutations died on her lips, and she sat down to write.

Now and then she stole a glance at him, but he was still in the same position. Half an hour passed, still he sat motionless.

Emily pitied him from the depths of her heart. He had at several times spoken to her of Matilda. She could not pretend to be ignorant of the blow that had fallen upon him.

She laid down her pen at last and stood beside him, but he did not notice her.

She took the hand that rested on the table, and pressed her lips to it, he started and raised his eyes.

There she was, looking so innocent and beautiful! Her large eyes, with a tear in each, gazing at him so pitifully!

"Hubert," said she, and the words fell softly on his ear, "I am so sorry to see

you thus. Aunt Penelope is so unhappy too."

"Ah! how selfish I am," he said. "I will banish an ungrateful woman from my remembrance. Penelope unhappy and you too, my sweet sister! yes, I will learn to forget, and think of nothing but you and Penelope. Ah! Emily, you do not know what it is to love, and not be loved in return. To find all the truth of an honest heart—your first, fresh, fond feelings crushed, thrown back on you as it were. Until I beheld Matilda, my studies, my books, were sufficient for me. Would I have ever thought of her if she had not ——? But it is madness to talk or think of her now—an unworthy weakness, I will banish every recollection of her." And as he spoke he began to busy himself with his papers.

Emily felt the blood tingle through her cheeks at his words. She did not want

ever to know what love was, a sister's affection for Vaughan was quite enough for her happiness. "I know it is only a sister's love I feel for him," she said to herself, "and I owe him so much! he is a true brother to me, and if Matilda had been worthy of him, would I not have looked upon her as a sister? I am sure I should.

She repeated the last sentence over and over to herself in the course of the day, as if to impress it on her mind. But it was always in rather a doubtful tone, as if she was not quite satisfied of the truth of it.

CHAPTER XXII.

“ But 'tis not Thought (for still the soul's employ'd,)
'Tis painful thinking that corrodes our clay,”

ARMSTRONG.

VAUGHAN determined to forget Matilda. He determined to think no more of the bitter disappointment she had inflicted on him, and to banish her entirely from his retrospections.

He burnt her letters, put away every thing that could bring her to mind, and endeavoured to solace himself with his literary pursuits.

But his heart and imagination had been

too deeply engaged, and he found it impossible to perform what he so wisely intended. His disappointment rankled so deeply, that his health began to fail, Emily trembled when she looked at him. The fate of Gerrard was ever present before her eyes.

Penelope, to whom in the first moments of his anguish he had betrayed a secret. which he had, until then, so carefully guarded from her, was both distressed and hurt at the disclosure. She had not suspected his engagement, and the thought of the concealment he had exercised towards her gave her excessive pain.

She put it down to a want of affection to her; but in this she was mistaken.

No brother could love or respect a sister more than Vaughan did Penelope. But he knew from the strictness of her ideas. that she would severely reprehend a clandestine engagement. He saw too that she

did not like Matilda and he persuaded himself that he was saving her pain by his silence.

From her earliest youth Penelope Vaughan had learned to see things as they were, without any of those illusions, which a warm imagination gives. Nature had endowed her with plain sense, a kind heart, and a demonstrative rather than an imaginative character. She had both foresight and judgment, and made up her mind on the moment. Having none of that softness, pliability, and fancy which mark the character of many women, and form perhaps their greatest charm; she was not as attractive in manner as most others, and required to be known well before the genuine ore could be discovered beneath the outward appearance of chilliness and stoicism.

Thus entirely free from errors—the result of imagination predominating over

judgment; and, from early occupation, and the influence which a preponderating feeling exercises over the mind unacquainted with the devastation which the storm of passion makes in many a heart, she had no compassion for what she deemed a folly in either sex, and looked with contempt upon the victim made miserable by unrequited love.

No character is without a shade, and this want of sympathy where females are in general most ready to extend it, this hardness—if it may be so called, in Penelope, will by many be considered as a drawback to her numerous valuable qualities.

She did not therefore sympathise with Vaughan, and felt rather anger and contempt for what she called his self-indulgence. Emily read him better, and wept in secret over the devastation, a fixed idea which he could not overcome, was making in his happiness and health.

Vaughan found himself unable to turn his thoughts on any subject, strive as he might, or to wrestle with the demon Melancholy.

Nobody could condemn him more than he did himself for, what he justly considered, a weakness. Yet he felt that he truly realized the words of the poet, and that it might well be said of him that in his sight,

“ The sun grows pale
A mournful visionary light o’erspreads
The cheerful face of nature ; earth becomes
A dreary desert, and heav’n frowns above.”

“ This ought not to be,” he exclaimed, as he paced up and down a dark walk in the garden formed by the intertwined branches of some old nut-trees planted along each side of a strip of green-sward ; “ This ought not to be, I make every one unhappy—Penelope despises me, I despise myself ; and my sweet adopted sister,

Emily, looks at me so compassionately, with tears starting in her full, blue eyes! I must endeavour to escape from myself, and from them too, for a short time.

Although I have not for months given the attention I ought to literature, I have been better paid for what I have done this last year than ever I expected; I have money to spare at present, I will go and travel, change of scene will be of use to me. I will lay schemes for wealth, and power, and fame. I need not give up the editorship of the periodical. Emily can read over the articles sent for insertion, and forward to me what she considers the best. My travels will open new sources for thought, and suggest matter for new papers. At present invention is dull, and my brain is like an arid desert. Besides I need not stay long on the continent. A rapid tour, with a pause here and there if anything particular strikes my eye, or oc-

cupies my mind, will suffice. I must banish this regret, and look upon what I have lost as a gilded toy—a fair deceit—a faithless ‘Will-o’-the-Whisp.’ ”

Vaughan had made his determination. His sister did not oppose it, and Emily applauded his resolve.

On the morning of his departure he was deeply hurt at Penelope’s manner, still cold and silent. She had not forgiven him he saw. He thought she would have unbent—he was mistaken. In reality Penelope could not bring herself to make any allowance.

But Emily’s parting was so ingenuous, she displayed so openly the interest she took in him, that he looked back two or three times, as she stood at the court gate, to answer the wave of the handkerchief, and catch her repeated adieu. It was some balm for the pain his sister’s stoicism had given him.

The sight of his distress at Penelope's continued coldness, and her pity for his altered appearance and depressed spirits, made Emily forget every shadow of her usual reserve. She hung upon his arm, and clasped his hand at the last with all the wishes that a fond sister might be supposed to utter.

When he was gone she started and colored at the recollection of the kiss he had pressed upon her cheek—just as he used to do some six or eight years before.

“Ah,” thought she, “he feels that I am doubly his sister now—Penelope is so distant.”

CHAPTER XXIII.

“The days of old, though time has reft
The dazzling splendour which they cast ;
Yet many a remnant still is left
To shadow forth the past.”

ECKHARD.

VAUGHAN'S tour was not so rapid as he meant it to be. Circumstances occurred which detained him a couple of months longer abroad than he had at first intended, and rendered change of scene the more productive of benefit.

Passing rapidly through the south of France, he stopped for a day or two at Pau, and there fell in with one of his first

pupils, a young man of some cleverness, who had been exploring the country at the foot of the Pyrenees, and was meditating more distant excursions. Ellard—such was the name of this gentleman, whom Vaughan valued very highly, had been staying two or three weeks at Pau, amusing himself with scientific researches, being somewhat of a botanist, and having a taste for mineralogy. He was now, however, ready for a start.

“One can see a great deal more in a walking tour,” said he, “than in any other mode of travelling—one gets out of the accustomed well-known roads. I have been twice over the beaten track that tourists generally follow, and you have been through France, Italy, and Switzerland before. Suppose we go into Spain and Portugal, make it a walking tour, and take a guide to carry our carpet bags. We can leave the heavy luggage here, what do you say?”

“Agreed,” said Vaughan, “it is just what I should like.”

They set forward on their expedition, and pierced into many wild spots, seldom or never trodden by the stranger.

Vaughan filled his journal with old traditions, stories of banditti, sketches of the manners of the mountaineers and peasantry inhabiting the hills and valleys through which they wandered, and romantic Moorish tales, gleaned from the lips of those who had learned them in their nursery; while his companion was equally busy in delineating with his pencil every object that struck him from its wild sublimity, or historical association.

Many a Moorish castle was pointed out to them of which it might be said

“The billows of the ages o’er thee swim,
Gloomy and fathomless; thy tale is told.”

Thus they travelled through great part of

Spain—visited Madrid, crossed the Sierra-Morena, and after passing through Cordova took up their abode for a week or two at Grenada.

Here was food for pen and pencil! Grenada! there was inspiration in the name.

Vaughan went over and over the ruined palaces of the Alhambra and Generaliph. Every step reminded him of the magnificence, grandeur, and power of the Moors in Spain—the treachery of the Zegrís—the misfortunes of the Abencerrages—the persecutions of the innocent Queen, and the gallantry of the Spanish Knights who came at her bidding, and risked their lives to establish her honor.

He trod their courts with intense interest. The delight with which he had read in his boyhood of the tilts and tournaments held at Grenada—of the trial of the Sultana, and the account of the day when all Grenada wept, prepared to behold the

execution of their beloved Queen, who, relying on the Spanish faith, refused to accept Moorish defenders—was present to him. He remembered all this, and how breathlessly he perused it. Then the burst of pleasure when he came to the arrival of Don Juan, Lord of Carthagená and his Knights—the fall and confession of the traitor Zegri, and the acquittal of the Queen.

The marble columns, fountains, basso-relievos, multitude of inscriptions in these palaces, all proclaimed them to have been the residence of a monarch.

The superb court, called the Lion's court, where the doomed Abencerrages were, one by one, ordered to attend the king and then beheaded in one of the neighbouring halls, called up visions of a past (over which no doubt the Moors long mourned) and his thoughts were similar to those of the poet who so beautifully exclaims

“Where is thy horn of battle? that but blown
Brought every chief of Afric from his throne;
Brought every spear of Afric from the wall;
Brought every charger barbed from the stall,
Till all its tribes sat mounted on the shore;
Waiting the waving of thy torch to pour
The living deluge on the fields of Spain.
Queen of earth’s loveliness, there was a stain
Upon thy brow—the stain of guilt and gore;
Thy course was bright, bold, treacherous—and tis o’er.”

Meantime Penelope took herself to task for being so irritated with Vaughan.

Now that he was absent a thousand reasons presented themselves in excuse of his conduct with respect to Matilda.

She called to mind his depth of feeling and vividness of imagination ever since he was a boy—how enthusiastic in his likings—how constant in his friendships—how captivated by the beautiful, whether in nature or art—how eager in their pursuits—the wonder was he had never loved before—quite different from herself in every thing, she owned, for nature had made

him a genius—given him talent and brilliancy, which she had not. She retraced in her mind every step of his childhood—his devoted attachment to herself, uniting, as it were, fraternal with filial affection. Only in this instance he had any concealment from her.

Penelope sighed after she had gone over and over every point.

All her arguments in his favour could not prevent her from blaming him still. But her anger had vanished, and her letter, when she did write to him, was in the old kind style.

Vaughan's eyes sparkled with joy when the well-known hand-writing reached him. He glanced his eye over the page, pressed it to his lips, and found the more fault with himself for what had passed.

Penelope had partly relieved her heart in a conversation with Emily by expressing her certainty that Matilda was much

the more culpable person of the two in forming a clandestine engagement. She was very thankful, she said, for her brother's escape—what happiness could a man expect with a heartless flirt?

Her topic of discourse now, with Emily, was principally of Vaughan. His letter to her was fond, his self-reproach for having a concealment from her so genuine, that this little estrangement only served to draw the ties of brother and sister, if possible, more closely than ever.

Besides Penelope felt that Vaughan would not easily make another choice. Most likely he would never marry, and this was the only point in which Miss Vaughan's affection was selfish. She never wanted him to marry. She thought a single life much happier.

This opinion might have arisen partly from a wish to keep her brother with her, partly from recollections imprinted on her

mind from childhood. Her own father and mother had never been a happy couple—not from any serious cause, but from a dissimilarity of pursuits and wishes, which an unyielding temper on both sides brought into daily collision.

Her conversation with Emily, as we have just said, begun on what point it might, was sure to turn at last on Vaughan. It was the *épanchement* of the heart, closed to him for a short time.

She had a thousand anecdotes to relate of his early youth—of his unselfishness, his love of truth, the self-denial he practised when a mere boy, to enable him out of a very small allowance to assist a friend in distress—the energy with which in after life, he struggled against difficulties, and the genius with which he mastered every thing he took in hand.

Emily's opinion of Vaughan's character was so high that Penelope's eulogiums

could not increase it. But the theme was pleasing, every incident relating to him had interest for her, and she thought Miss Vaughan had never before been so truly amiable and agreeable. She had always revered and valued her, but now she hung upon her words.

Vaughan marked out the towns where he should expect to find letters from his sister and Emily, and thus was able to keep up an unbroken correspondence.

Emily was complete mistress of her pen, and her letters were always charming. Vaughan shewed several of them to his companion.

“What a delightful girl Miss Hume must be,” said Ellard, “her letters are so exquisitely natural, and yet so clever, but then by your account of her she must be too blue—deep, deep blue.”

“Not a bit, Ellard, I assure you, she is the most unaffected girl you ever saw.

You could never guess by her manner and appearance that she could do more than the generality of young ladies. I mean well-educated ones of course."

"I certainly should like to make the acquaintance of your sister and your engaging *protegee*," said Ellard.

"So you shall by and by," returned Vaughan, "you know you have promised to pay me a visit at the Hall shortly after our return."

"I should like it of all things," said Ellard, "and hope nothing may prevent me."

Ellard admired Vaughan's talents, and appreciated his worth. The few years Vaughan was his senior did not prevent a warm friendship from springing up between them. It was founded upon the intimate knowledge and approval each had of the character of the other.

Ellard was a young man of plain ap-

pearance, but with an amiable mind, and a good understanding. There was nothing brilliant or attractive about him, but he was nevertheless clever, and had a thorough knowledge of those subjects to which he had directed his attention.

The very difference in their pursuits only served to make them more agreeable companions, for each found in the other a more extended acquaintance with some particular branch of learning than he had himself.

Thus, Ellard with his pencil gave you an idea of the magnificence, even in decay, of the ruins around, which the pen and poetry of Vaughan—for he could write poetry, and good poetry too—described in another way. Ellard had more taste for science and antiquarian researches, Vaughan for classical authors, poets and historians. Ellard pored over an ancient half-worn inscription for hours, it might

be in some fair romantic spot, heedless of all else, while Vaughan, with the poet's eye studied the book of nature spread out before him, hung with rapture upon the music of the distant rill, and caught inspiration from the odours, the echoes and the shifting clouds.

CHAPTER XXIV.

“ Then, in the blazon of sweet beauty’s best,
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,
I see their antique pen would have express’d
Even such a beauty as you master now.”

SHAKSPEARE.

VAUGHAN embraced his sister with delight, and rejoiced her heart with his improved health and looks.

There was no shadow on his brow. The remembrance of the past no longer appeared to haunt him. He had forgotten Matilda, or at least learned to remember her without pain.

Perhaps his manner might have been a shade graver than it used to be, but this was only the common result of severe disappointment, which, as often as it occurs, where the passions and affections are brought into play, stamps its print on the cheek, or the spirits; or, it may be indelibly on the heart. It is the agony of the mind—the pressure that is always accumulating in life. True, some bear their load more lightly than others—the finer the feeling, the less able to endure.

However, be this as it may, Penelope did not search too deep. The journals that Hubert had kept, so interesting to her, were proofs that he was not unemployed; and then, besides, he had so much to tell her, she was quite satisfied.

Vaughan was really surprised this time at seeing Emily. Somehow or other she looked more beautiful in his eyes than ever she had done before. Latterly he had

given her credit for being a very lovely woman, but now, since they had last met, she seemed to surpass herself.

Yet there was no change in Emily since Vaughan and she had last parted, except that the spirit within looked out more joyously from her deep blue eyes—her heart was more at ease—that was the embellishment.

And now that he was at home again, Vaughan felt that with two such sisters he ought to be happy.

He set to work immediately, and found that pen and imagination were, once more, both at his command. He was conscious that his compositions far outstripped any thing he had written before. The weight of time was gone. The day seemed too short for his employments.

Emily, with a secret perception that she had never been so happy in her life, was aiding him to the utmost of her power ;

and Penelope, reconciled to her devoting a portion of her time to literature by seeing that she was of such assistance to Vaughan, often brought her needle-work into the study, that she might have the pleasure of looking at her brother, and watching the progress of what he had in hand.

Thus passed a month or two when Ellard arrived, Vaughan received him with the warmth and enthusiasm he shewed for every one he valued, and introduced him with real satisfaction to his sister and Emily.

Miss Penelope felt truly happy to see him, he was a friend of her brother, that was sufficient. Not so Emily. She was sorry, she knew not why, at his visit. But when she examined her feelings, she chid herself for selfishness. It could be only because he would take up so much of Vaughan's time; and the book Vaughan was writing, and of which she was to accomplish a part, was so absorbing!

Ellard came to the Hall predisposed to like Emily. Her letters to Vaughan had made him long to behold her. He saw in them a union of cleverness and simplicity, that fascinated him. There was thought and feeling about every one but herself—not a touch of egotism or display.

It is not the first time that a gentleman has fallen in love with a lady from reading her letters.

He had discovered, too, that Vaughan, much as he praised and valued her, thought not himself of her with the sentiments of a lover. He had felt a secret satisfaction at it, and the idea had crossed him that such a companion would be just the one to suit a man of retired habits and pursuits like his own.

“She could enter into one’s views, find occupation for herself, and be happy and contented in retirement,” thought he.

Ellard was right in the idea he formed

of Emily's character. She had a mind that could make a desert bloom like the garden of Eden. Full of energy, resource, care for every thing, nothing was too great or too little for her hand—nothing beneath a determination to execute whatever she undertook, as well as it could be done, and all this in the most feminine, simple-minded, artless way in the world—a very woman in gentleness. No shew or thought that she was better or cleverer than other people, or that there was more merit in writing for the compositor's stick—as indeed there is not—than in drawing or singing, mixing the ingredients for a pudding, or making a dress.

Ellard came for one week, but he stayed one, two, three weeks, and still he was there.

Emily began to feel frightened lest he should lengthen out his visit through the summer, and then she scolded herself for her fears.

Miss Penelope looked as if she saw more than she spoke of, and Vaughan, who had not a suspicion of what was going on in his friend's breast, had the whole matter broken to him one morning in the garden. His friend Ellard wanted to deprive him of the sun-beam which brightened the old Hall—the ministering spirit—the presiding genius, that inhabited its time-worn walls.

It is impossible to express his surprise.

Knowing the extreme punctuality of Ellard as to time, (he had said he was come for a week), and the reserve of his manners, Vaughan might have suspected one would suppose, that there must be some attraction. But no, it had never occurred to him. He thought the entire party were so well suited to each other, that Ellard was loth to leave them.

While he, (Vaughan) wrote, Ellard had his own studies and pursuits; then, in the

afternoon they walked, in the evening they had the society the place afforded, if they were inclined to enter into it, or their own cheerful tea table at home.

Ellard never talked much—less in mixed society than anywhere else, yet there was one young lady in Llanluyd, Miss Lizzy Roberts, who had taken it upon herself to make him talk wherever she met him, and if Vaughan had been desired to single out a lady in the village as preferred by Ellard he would assuredly have said Miss Lizzy Roberts. Therefore, when Ellard spoke abruptly upon the subject of his love for Emily to him, he was thunderstruck for the moment, and experienced no sentiment but extreme surprise.

Yet he ought to have been highly gratified at it. Here was this young, charming Emily, wooed by an honest, sensible lover—a match in every way desirable—his friend too, a man that he esteemed, and

one he knew to be worthy of her, and this union of two people would join together the two friends, in the whole world the most highly valued by him. Why was he not rejoiced at it? Could any event more fortunate have occurred?

This consternation passed away however while Ellard was speaking, and the desirableness of the connection for Emily could not be overlooked. Ellard saw that his declaration had taken him unawares; he was nevertheless perfectly satisfied of his approbation before they parted.

He preferred that Vaughan should mention the subject to Emily before pressing his suit himself—he was a shy man—in fact he had made very little progress with her in conversation since he came, much as he admired her.

He laid this entirely to his own fault. He was not fitted for female society he fancied. It was his dullness. Any other

man would have got on better with so fascinating a girl as Emily.

He did not at all see that it was not his own dullness, but her distance and reserve that were the barriers. She did not want him to fancy her, and indeed was far from thinking he did.

Neither did Ellard expect that she was to reciprocate his feelings all at once. If Vaughan would pave the way for him; if Emily, aware of his sentiments, would say that she had no objection to try and like him; then, he thought, as he had an honest and free heart to offer, he might make progress.

Vaughan promised to find an opportunity that afternoon of speaking to Emily.

CHAPTER XXV.

“Let every eye negotiate for itself.”

SHAKESPEARE.

VAUGHAN had made the promise. He was satisfied it would be for Emily's happiness if she could like his friend ; yet he did not feel satisfied that they in this old Hall, would be the happier for her doing so.

And yet what but selfishness, he asked himself, could prevent them from being so.

At this thought of selfishness his heart smote him.

“Selfish with regard to Emily,” he

murmured, "herself the most unselfish being in the world, No, we must learn to do without her. To forget her cheerful smile, her light step, her heart ready for every good work, her head and fingers for every exertion, is impossible. Emily never can be forgotten. But this marriage is so suitable for her—age, fortune, pursuits."

And Vaughan went over and over again a list of reasons why it was the most desirable thing in the world. Finding however, that he could not make the idea as pleasurable to his mind as it ought to be, in very wilfulness against himself he became more and more eager every instant, to open it to Emily.

In the study he would tell her—that study where she had identified herself with all his own pursuits. No, no, that would not do so well, they might be interrupted. Besides, to think of being for hours every

day in that study without Emily at his side. No, no, it would not answer—he could not tell her there. In the garden. Penelope would be sure to be in the garden this fine day. No, he would ask her to take a stroll with him in the lanes. He would give Ellard a hint to leave them by themselves. Yes, Ellard had talked something about a sketch of a large gnarled oak in the wood (to fancy he could sketch that tree! the very worst thing he did—he could not sketch trees at all) he would put Ellard in mind of his intention, and, when he was fairly out of the way, take Emily off in another direction.

This plan he thought would answer.

So intent was Vaughan upon the subject, that, between thinking of it all the morning, and trying to employ himself as usual, he got a violent nervous headache.

In the afternoon, according to his purpose, he asked Emily to take a walk with him.

If Emily had been suspicious she might have perceived there was a little agitation in his voice. But she perceived nothing of it—the request was music to her ear. She should have a stroll with him unfettered by the company of Ellard, who, she knew had just left the house by himself.

Ellard had indeed joyfully taken the hint given him, and was gone in search of the oak tree, a drawing of which he intended should ornament Emily's portfolio, thankful to Vaughan, and full of pleasant day-dreams.

Vaughan and Emily walked on for some time in silence. It was a beautiful path by the edge of the river they pursued. Emily's step was light and elastic, her spirits were high, and if she was silent, it was because she felt so full of happiness, and of bright fancies caught from the inspiring landscape around her.

Vaughan was silent from a different

cause. He mused—he felt uncomfortable—he did not exactly know how to begin.

Emily looked at him once or twice, but he did not speak. Then she fancied that he was low-spirited—one of his old fits—and immediately as the thought crossed her mind, she began to talk in her liveliest manner, in order to engage and amuse him.

But she was suddenly stopped.

“Emily,” said he, abruptly, “I have something very particular to say to you, I brought you here on purpose to tell you.”

He paused.

To tell her what?—Emily’s heart felt as if it would have burst from its confinement, it throbbed and beat so violently on the instant.

It could not be a common topic he wanted to talk to her about. There was something different from its usual tone in

the sound of his voice. It could not be of books or writing, or any of those points he was accustomed to consult her on—these could have been as well discussed in the study, she thought. Ah! could it be! and a new light flashed upon her. Cease, cease, throbbing heart, he speaks again, and with increased earnestness.

“Emily,” he continued, heaving a deep breath, and drawing the hand which now scarcely touched his arm, more firmly within it—determined to shake off his selfishness, and plead the cause of his friend in the best possible manner—“Emily, there is nothing in the world dearer to me than your happiness, and if what I am about to say to you can in any way conduce to it, although it must separate you from Penelope and” from me, he would have said, but the words almost choked him, and he changed them into “many friends, yet still ——”

Here there was a pause. The hand just secured, trembled so much on his arm, and seemed so near escaping, that he caught hold of it with his other hand and grasped it tightly. Emily had never allowed herself to contemplate such a declaration. Vaughan's manner had always been brotherly—almost parental—but now she could not be deceived. His words—his interrupted sentences—ah! she had never, never looked for this. She was breathless, drinking in every word from one so honored, so admired.

Cease beating heart, be still ye rustling leaves, she must not lose a word.

“Yes, Emily,” and now he exerted himself to do his friend justice, “Henry Ellard is a man truly worthy of any woman's affections, and if I think him, Emily, worthy of this hand,” and as he spoke, he pressed it in his own, “it is the very highest eulogium I can offer him; for

upon none but a truly amiable and excellent man would I wish you to bestow it."

The name of Mr. Ellard had immediately broken the spell. Emily felt, at the consciousness of her weakness, as if she could willingly have sunk into the ground, but seeing that her secret was quite safe, and in none other keeping but her own, she commanded herself to the utmost, and said faintly,

"Mr. Ellard is very good to think—to have so high an opinion of me, but ——"

"But what, Emily?" Vaughan exclaimed, eagerly.

"But," and here she collected her voice and spoke very clear and distinct, "I cannot return the preference he honors me with, and you and aunt Penelope would not, I am sure, wish ——"

"No, no, Emily," he said warmly, "we would not on any account wish to force your inclinations, but there is so much

that is valuable in my friend Ellard, that I am certain if you would allow him to plead his own cause—he is a timid man—he would have done better to have spoken at once on the subject himself to you, but now as I have broken the ice for him —”

“No, no, pray do not give him any encouragement,” said Emily, “it would be only to deceive him. If you and aunt Penelope are tired of me, with the education I have received, I could make myself ——”

“Heavens! leave us, no my dear Emily—the house would be truly a wilderness without you. We should be but too happy to have you always with us.”

This was a little alleviation of Emily’s pain, said as it was so energetically.

“I press you,” he continued, (thinking it his duty both to Emily and his friend not to let the matter drop so easily.) “I press you upon this subject because I

know the worth of Ellard, and think you mutually suited to each other—give it at least a little consideration.”

“Cease, cease,” said Emily, now almost bursting into tears, “pray cease—if you knew what pain you give me you would not proceed.”

Vaughan looked surprised at the emotion with which she uttered those words. Yet he could not help being pleased—he did not want to lose Emily.

“Dear girl!” said he affectionately, “do not fret yourself; I will tell poor Ellard at once, if you like, that there is no hope for him.”

“Thank you,” replied Emily again, self-possessed, “that is what I wish; it would only distress me to speak to him on a point upon which my mind is made up, and give him the pain of hearing himself refused.”

“Agreed,” returned Vaughan, and, in

spite of the disappointment he knew the result of his mission would be to his friend, he felt a throb of pleasure for which he reproached himself. Then he turned his head and gazed at his companion.

She had a very dejected air.

“Come!” said he playfully, “my sweet Emily must not look as if she had lost a lover, when it is only that she is about to refuse one. What! not a touch of female vanity! no consciousness of power! not the least elated! Ah! Ellard will certainly be the loser; but we, Penelope and myself, we will be the gainers. I could not but picture, as I came along, how gloomy the Hall would be without you; and my study. Oh Emily! I should hate it when you were gone.”

All this and a great deal more, for Vaughan’s spirits seemed to rise in proportion as Emily’s fell—heard with throbbing temples and a palpitating heart, served

to give her time to recover from the alternation of feelings into which his first words had plunged her, and they returned from their walk without Vaughan having a suspicion of the pain he had inflicted upon her.

CHAPTER XXVI.

“In adversity
The mind grows tough by buffetting.”

Rowe.

EMILY devoured her chagrin in secret, and hid it bravely. She blamed herself much for vanity in mistaking Vaughan's sentiments for a moment.

Then she sighed and mused.

“I have his friendship at least,” she said to herself, “and valuing his friend Mr. Ellard as he does, his thinking me suited to him shews that he does not light-

ly value me too. And then the friendship of such a man as Hubert, is it not worth the love of a thousand? Yes, certainly, and I am, I may be proud of that. What he has told me of Mr. Ellard's preference I will not divulge even to Mrs. Stanley. And now I must make myself happy again. No one has a lover's place in Hubert's heart; perhaps no one ever will. Surely the friendship of such a man ought to suffice me fully."

And Emily really felt that—provided no second Matilda captivated Vaughan—to pass away all her days with him, and Penelope would be all she ought, all she could desire.

Nevertheless she paled and reddened whenever she thought of her momentary vanity.

Ellard was truly disappointed when Vaughan imparted to him the result of his conversation with Emily.

At first he had an idea of persevering in his suit, but when they met he saw there was no room for hope in her reserved manner—no look in the eye to contradict the refusal she had sent him.

In a day or two he went away, his mind impressed with a secret conviction that Emily liked Vaughan, while Vaughan—who, when they met abroad, he had early discovered was recovering from a bitter love-disappointment, had no thoughts of her.

“How could he ever have had eyes for any one else,” exclaimed Ellard as he thus reflected.

Vaughan took himself to task for being so loth to part with Emily. He found he could not echo his sister’s regrets that their *protegée* would not listen to Mr. Ellard’s offer of his hand, for that he had made the offer could not be concealed from Penelope, who, from the begin-

ning was the most clear-sighted of the party.

This feeling, so at variance with that of Penelope, set Vaughan to examine his own sentiments, and he discovered there so much of admiration and love, aye, of love too, for Emily, that the idea of her ever liking any one, gave him excessive pain. He felt assured she had never as yet had a preference—could he teach her to have a preference for himself, that is to love him as he wished to be loved?

The question was rather a puzzling one. But once having got upon this dangerous ground, and having considered what a fortunate man he was, that she did not fancy Ellard, he determined, if possible, that no other should win the prize, and that, to attain this end, he must henceforward play the part of the lover himself, and endeavour to draw towards him the affections of a heart, which he found he valued above everything upon earth.

These sentiments, which had been for some time making way in his bosom unknown to himself, took off all at once from the frank, brotherly freeness of his manner, and infused such an air of tenderness into it as startled Emily.

She, poor girl, smarting still from the late mistake she had made, was alarmed at the change, and feared lest he might have penetrated her secret. Her charming gaiety, and lively flow of wit vanished—the topics which had so long drawn them together were no longer discussed by her as formerly—her pen seemed to lose its facility of expression—a leaden weight oppressed her spirits.

At this sudden alteration Hubert fearing that he was becoming as disagreeable to her as Mr. Ellard had been, became, in his turn, deeply pained and mortified.

Thus two people, each secretly attached to the other, grew every day more distant

in their deportment, and more constrained in their conversation.

The sun-beam no longer lighted up the old Hall—a cloud seemed to encompass it.

Somehow or other Vaughan never could get Emily to take a walk with him alone now, as she used to do, yet it always seemed as if it was only accident prevented her—either she was gone to practice a song with Mrs. Stanley, or she was completing a piece of needle-work for aunt Penelope, or she had walked to see Mrs. Benson half an hour before he was disengaged, or she had a headache. Always some excuse that appeared a rational one at the time.

He could not help recollecting however, that *once* there never was an excuse—that her eye beamed with pleasure—her work was thrown aside, and nothing seemed to stand in the way if he meditated a walk

that he thought was not too long for her.

Matters were on this footing when Lord Kidwelly arrived at Bonham Park, bringing his aunt, Lady Penrhyn with him and a party of fashionables.

His daughters were both in Italy, Diana having accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Delville abroad.

The usual routine of dinners and evening entertainments were immediately commenced, and Lord Kidwelly, entirely ignorant of the secret engagement that had existed between Matilda and Hubert Vaughan, and the consequent pain inflicted upon him by her marriage, sought Vaughan, whose reputation in the literary world was on the increase, with the same eagerness as before.

Miss Vaughan and Emily were of course always included in these invitations, and poor Emily now found a resource in them from the constraint and unhappiness which

the thought of Vaughan having divined her secret laid her under at the Hall.

And now a new source of uneasiness arose for Vaughan. An addition was made to the party assembled at Bonham Park, in the persons of the honorable Walter Bonham and a Mr. Merton—a man past middle life, and very peculiar looking—who was introduced as a near connection of the family.

He had in effect been married in India to a sister-in-law of Lord Kidwelly, the widow of an officer; but as she did not survive her second marriage quite a year, the relationship would have been entirely forgotten, if circumstances had not thrown him and young Bonham together, when a rich uncle, with more rupees than he knew what to do with, was found to be a most valuable acquisition.

Mr. Bonham was a dashing, careless, extravagant sort of young man, equally

free, in the eyes of the world, from positive virtue or positive vice. Not bad looking either, and with manners, which when he liked, could be both winning and persuasive. His heart, however, was cold, and incapable of generous impressions. No impulsive feeling towards good, or virtuous intention, neglected, or forgotten, helped to soften a mind fixed on its own gratification ; but the dark stream of selfishness ran deeply beneath a smiling surface. Courage he certainly possessed ; for he was fearless of danger, and had even tested his strength of nerve in one or two duels when in France. • His meeting with Mr. Merton took place in Russia, where he had been of some service to him, before he knew that any connection existed between them, having assisted in getting a boat out of a perilous position in which Mr. Merton was a passenger.

It seemed that Mr. Merton instead of

waiting for the regular packet-boat to cross a dangerous ferry, had got a fisherman to put him over in a small fishing skiff. A sudden squall coming on, the fishing boat was drawn towards an eddy, where it would undoubtedly have been lost if the rowers and passengers in the ferry-boat, which just came up in time, had not exerted themselves to save it.

Of passengers there were only two, Mr. Bonham and his servant, both powerful men, and good hands at an oar.

On being received into the ferry-boat, and seeing that he was partly indebted to two countrymen for his preservation, Mr. Merton inquired of the servant what his Master's appellation might be. The name of Bonham struck him directly, as he had often heard his wife speak of her deceased sister, Lady Kidwelly.

He immediately addressed Mr. Bonham and a few words made it clear that it

was his wife's nephew he had come across.

Bonham, inwardly chagrined at the adventure, would have played off his wonted airs, and coolly shaken off his new-found uncle, if some words Mr. Merton accidentally let fall, had not made him think he might find a friend in need in this strange connection.

Walter Bonham was indeed at this moment sadly out at elbows, for, careless and extravagant, he always anticipated his income, and was on the point of writing to his father to entreat a loan, which it was very unlikely he would obtain, in order to enable him to return to England.

As they sat in the little inn of the village whither they were bound for the night and smoked a pipe together, Bonham listened with wonder mingled with incredulity to the history Mr. Merton related of himself. His style of travelling, so different from that of the generality of

men who have been residents in the East, had at first impressed the scion of nobility with a mean idea of his condition ; but his magnificent offers of money to any amount and the pleasure he expressed, that he, a man without tie or connection in life, should thus light upon a nephew, soon made Bonham change his opinion.

Mr. Merton's life would have made a novel, so strange and wild were some of his adventures.

He had run away from home early with the intention of joining a friend who was engaged in the opium trade, but was taken prisoner with some others by a Japanese pirate, and carried to Japan where he remained in confinement for several years. When released he managed to get to Ceylon, and from thence to India, where after various adventures he took service with the Sovereign of one of the warlike tribes on the confines of Tartary. Having

had a medical man as companion when in captivity in Japan, he had learned from him some knowledge of drugs and how to use them. This he turned to good account and became famous for the cures he performed. The European Physician was sought for by those far and near, and in a few years he amassed a fortune never dreamed of in his wildest visions.

Once he had made an excursion of a few weeks into the territory under English jurisdiction.

There he met the widow of an officer of the Company's service, a very attractive woman, who, reluctant to leave a country where she had enjoyed all the luxuries, amusements, and attentions which a life in India offers to ladies, was not difficult to win. Whether her marriage with Mr. Merton would have conduced to her happiness, is very doubtful, but the experiment made was not a long one, as sudden

illness carried her off a few months after they were united.

He never thought of making a second choice. Fond of his own way in every thing, he found that a single life was most suited to his tastes and habits.

He had always had a predilection for travelling, and becoming tired of the post he held, with means sufficient to satisfy every wish, he began a sort of erratic existence which had many charms for him.

Visiting various parts of Tartary, he had entered into Russia, without any definite end in view except that of going where curiosity led him, when Mr. Bonham met him.

A citizen of the world he had been, according to his own narrative, a Parsee with the Parsees, and a Mahometan with the Mahometans.

He had no relative that he knew of. On escaping from Japan he had written seve-

ral times to an only sister he had left in England, but no answer had ever been returned, and further inquiries led him to suppose she was dead.

Young Bonham, who, with all his apparent carelessness of manner had an eye to his own interest, finding this stranger so wealthy, managed to attach him in a great degree, and persuaded him to accompany him to England, where he introduced him to his father and sisters in London, much to their surprise, and rather to their dissatisfaction. But this last feeling was removed on Mr. Merton presenting Diana and Matilda, then about to accompany Mr. Delville to Italy, with jewels to a large amount, and various other costly presents, while Lord Kidwelly, ready to acknowledge his connection with so rich a man, overlooked all his eccentricities, and insisted upon his coming to Bonham Park with Walter, who had promised to join his father there in a few weeks.

Mr. Merton was a remarkable looking person.

As he sat in the corner of Lord Kidwelly's handsome drawing room, with an absent air, and so careless an attitude that his figure was nearly bent double—his skin parched and shrivelled like that of an Egyptian mummy, and the scanty hair on his head white as snow—he gave one the idea of a very old man. But when he rose from his seat you perceived that his height was gigantic, and that his form still had the appearance of great strength.

In effect he was not an old man, but he had gone through great hardships in the early years of life, which, though wrestled with and overcome, told on his iron frame, and were the origin of a heart-complaint, that he at times suffered much from.

CHAPTER XXVII.

“ I remember
Of such a time.”

SHAKSPEARE.

THE VAUGHANS with several others were at Bonham Park on the evening of the day that the new comers made their appearance there.

Emily had not seen Mr. Bonham before, as he had never been in the habit of bestowing much of his time on his father or sisters.

Her observations extended no farther

than that in person he resembled his father, and that his manners appeared to be more generally courteous than those of his sisters. But his companion struck her very much. There was something in him so entirely different from any one she had ever seen—something that marked him as having been all his days an inhabitant of a far away land. Did the peculiarity lie in his air, his complexion, his dress? She asked herself this question, but she could not tell—perhaps in all three—it was something that was not European.

This stranger's extreme silence, and a sort of abstraction and melancholy, which hung about him, made her think that he was wrapt up in his own reveries, and took no note of any one. But she soon observed that she herself, of all the people in the room, attracted his gaze. More than once she caught him with his deep set dark eyes fixed upon her face so intently, that

he seemed as if he would have read her inmost soul.

This continued observation, although he interested her, became at last so uncomfortable, that she changed her place two or three times to fly from it. But whenever she, by chance, looked at him, it seemed to her as if his eyes were averted on the instant, and that he had been studying her face as before.

“What a strange looking man that old Indian is!” said Miss Vaughan as they returned home. “I am sure his image must haunt Emily to-night, for he seemed to be fascinated by her. His eyes followed her everywhere.

“I did not think you observed it, Aunt Penelope,” said Emily, “but it is very true, and, for some reason or other, I cannot get him out of my head.”

“Indeed!” exclaimed Vaughan, roused from a reverie by his sister’s observation,

and Emily's reply. But he did not feel any uneasiness—Mr. Merton was too old and plain for that. He was rather pleased that neither lady seemed to have observed that Mr. Bonham's eyes had been directed towards the same object.

"I did not catch the name of this stranger who is so likely to haunt your dreams, Emily," said Miss Vaughan, "did you."

"No," replied Emily, "I did not; Lord Kidwelly pronounced it so indistinctly."

"It is Merton," returned Vaughan.

"Merton! that was mamma's name before she was married," said Emily.

"Yes, Ellen Merton," observed Miss Vaughan.

"Perhaps he is a relative of yours, Emily, said Vaughan after a pause, "and may have recognised some family resemblance in you."

“A relative! how very odd it would be if there should prove to be any relationship between us! But if there is it must be very distant, for Mrs. Benson told me that dear mamma had no near relations.”

“It seems like a dream to me that I have heard Ellen Merton had a brother,” said Miss Vaughan, after they had all been silent for a while, “yet I cannot call to mind other than her own sweet face living in the cottage with her blind grandmother.”

“O no,” said Emily, “I never had an uncle; if I had I am sure Mrs. Benson would have told me of him. If Mr. Merton is a connection of mine, he cannot be a near one.”

The name of ‘Merton’ and the stranger’s fixed gaze, kept Emily waking that night and helped to divert her thoughts from painful meditations.

Mr. Merton too was wakeful. The

sight of Emily had called up visions of the past. She was the image of a sister he had once loved very much—that is, as much as a headstrong, selfish youth could love any thing in the world.

Perhaps Ellen—for he was none other than the brother of Ellen Hume—might have assisted in spoiling him in those early days, for, doating on him from childhood with all the fond love of a sister's heart, she seemed to live but to study his wishes, and never contradicted him but once. That was the day preceding the one on which he disappeared from home, when she took a different view of her grandmother's conduct to what he did.

Bitterly she lamented having been called upon to give an opinion on the subject. The thought of it often corroded her peace. But though she blamed him and wearied over his silence, she never ceased to love him. Many a time—even

after she was married—had she secretly wept in the darkness of night when thinking of him, and on her dying bed his name mingled with the prayers she put up for her baby, and earnestly did she entreat Providence to watch over him, if it were possible that he was still among the living.

Perhaps in after years the gentle spirit of the sister might have been sent, as a ministering angel, to guide the brother through the devious paths he trod, and to lead him back to his native land.

Wales and all the associations connected with it, had had but little place in his mind for years. The remembrance of his grandmother had never been pleasing, for she, poor woman, frightened at the career her son Arthur had run, tried, by checking as much as possible, the spirits of her grandson Ralph, to prevent his following the same path. She was not blind then,

although her sight was beginning to fail, and misfortune had embittered her temper. She would always have him beneath her own eye ; he was to have no companions, no boyish sports. In drawing the rein thus tightly she snapped it in two, and naturally headstrong and wilful, Ralph heeded her not in the least. His sister too had been dead to his memory for a long time. Fair and dear as she was, she had vanished from the earth, and, until he met young Bonham, he felt that he had not a connection in the world.

Now, however, as we have just said, visions of his sweet sister rose before him—of his sister at the time he left her, standing on life's margin, nor child nor yet woman grown—this pretty sister ! always ready to receive him with open arms, and to cheer and chase away every gloom that hung over him. Several years younger than himself, she had been his

plaything from childhood. If his grandmother scolded him, and very often did his rude behaviour deserve reproof—Ellen was at his side in a minute with her winning little ways and caresses, endeavouring to soften any pain he might feel, and then running to assure grandmama that ‘poor Ralph would not offend again.’ And as these remembrances came across him, a deep pang of regret for the loved and lost, who would have welcomed him so fondly had she lived, wrung his soul—that pang concentrating so many bitter thoughts, which almost all of us have felt one time or other.

The resemblance of Emily to his sister, had, this evening in an unusual manner, softened the iron man, who had sternly buffeted against the storms of life on the wide ocean of which he had so early cast himself, and where he had at last gained what so many men seek in vain for—wealth.

In accompanying Mr. Bonham to Llanluyd, he had not expected to find a trace of those he had left there so many years ago. And yet here was a living Ellen. Not the exact counterpart perhaps when he examined her closely—but there was the smile—there the changing colour—there the dove like eye, but with more animation, more life in it.

Who could this fair girl be? So like his sainted sister! To-morrow he must inquire. Some one in the village must remember Ellen, and what became of her.

Early on the following morning he began to make inquiries about Emily, and was not long in finding out that she was the great grand-daughter of old Mrs. Thornton.

He lost no time in seeking the Vaughans' house, although early memories had made the name unpleasant to his

ear. Notwithstanding the conversation which took place the night before, the inmates were not at all prepared for his sudden appearance.

They had not yet left the breakfast room into which he was ushered.

The natural burst of joy which broke from Mr. Merton's inmost heart as he claimed Emily as his niece, argued his near relationship, and a little hoard of treasured memorials, kept in spite of the wildness of his boyhood, and his various adventures, stamped his identity at once.

The old leather pocket-book, which had been looked into and thrown aside as worthless by his pirate captors, though unopened for many a year now revealed the handwriting of Ellen in two or three affectionate letters with a certificate of his own name and baptism, and some other testimonials, which he had carried to sea with him.

Part of that day and the next were passed in minute inquiries on his side. He would know Emily's history from childhood, and went to visit the good Mrs. Benson with her, who now, from age and infirmities, although free from bodily suffering, could not look forward to being long in this world. Her joy was excessive at the unlooked for discovery. The thought that her dear Emily was likely to find a kind parent in her uncle made her feel, that, having nothing else to wish for, she could lay down her life in peace.

Mr. Merton heard from Mrs. Benson many little circumstances relating to his sister, that afflicted him much, and drew the new found tie closer between him and Emily.

An uncle !

Emily—low spirited and melancholy for some time at the position in which she was placed with Vaughan—felt her spirits

immediately revive on this discovery. The old Indian was her mother's brother. He claimed her, not as a niece, but as an adopted daughter, and the prospect of a separation from the Vaughans for a while—which, a short time before, would have filled her with the greatest grief—was now looked upon in the agony of disappointed love as a resource unexpectedly opened to her.

Mr. Merton's plans were quickly formed.

He would take a house in the immediate neighbourhood of London. Emily should be the mistress of it, with liberty to ask what friends she liked thither.

He only excepted the Vaughans for the present, and there was something moody in his air as he did so.

“I do not mean to exclude them entirely Emily—but just at first I should rather they were not among our guests—I will endeavour as your friends” (and

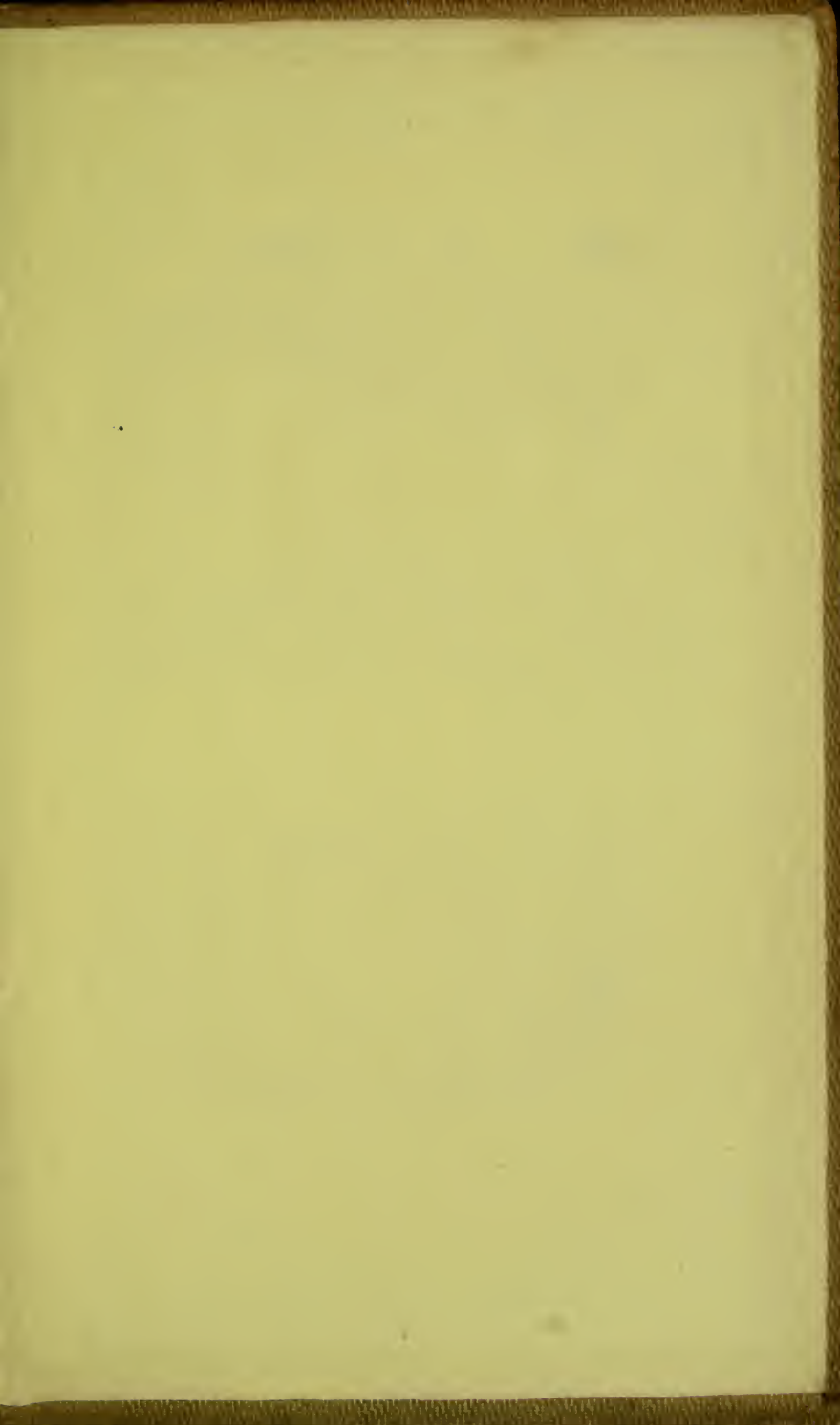
there was a compression of the lip and an emphasis on the words 'your friends') "to welcome them another time."

Emily did not understand his thoughts.

"It is strange" she reflected "that he should make this exception—He knows I owe so much to the Vaughans!—But it is better thus—It will be for my peace of mind that we should be divided, and when we do meet, I hope to shew Hubert Vaughan that he is as indifferent to me as I am to him."

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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